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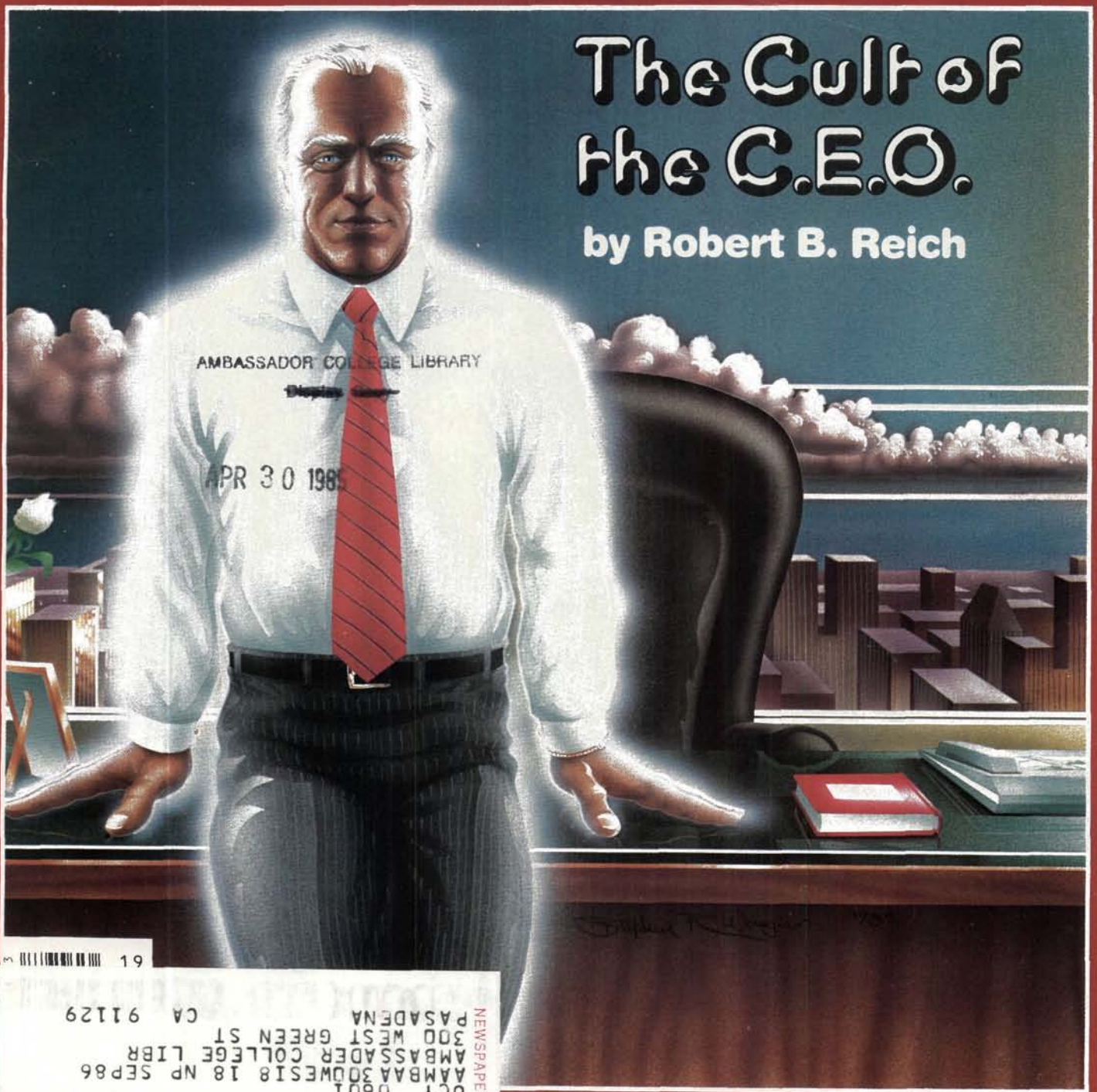

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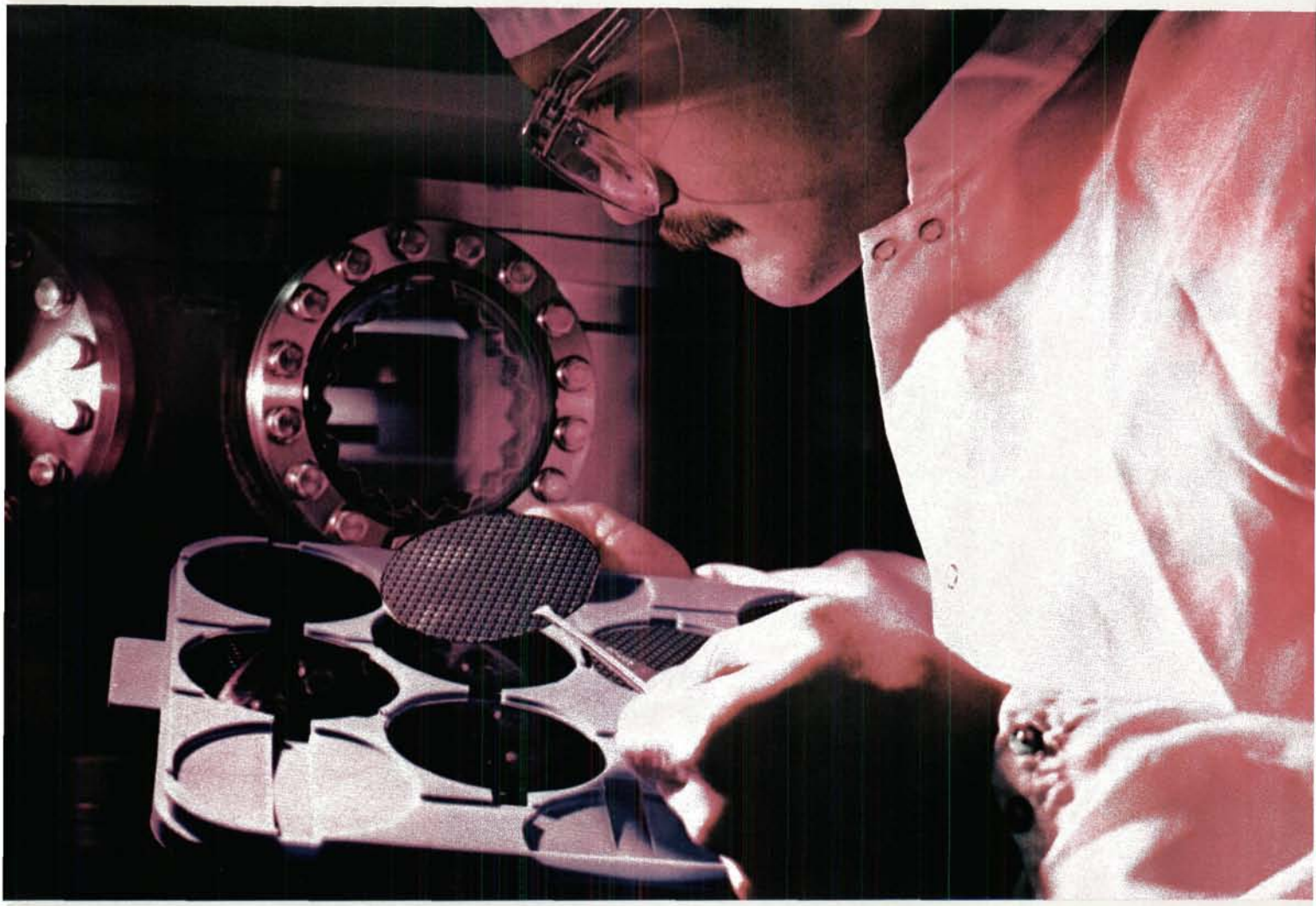

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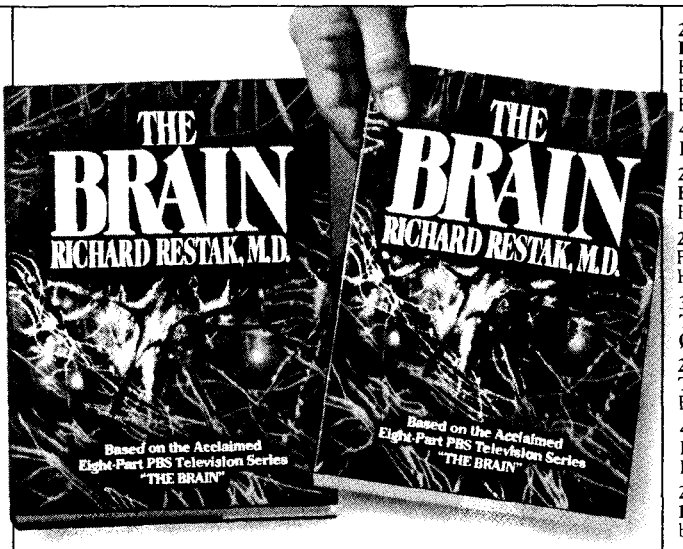
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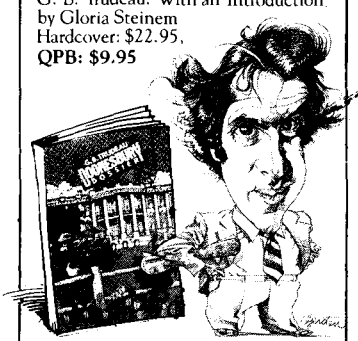

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FROM WASHINGTON

GREASY KID STUFF

Have you hugged your child today? Careful, it's a trick question. According to the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse, both excessive "fondling" on the one hand and "failures to provide . . . psychological nurturance" on the other can add you to the statistics on the nation's most fashionable social pathology. The "Living" section of *The New York Times* recently offered an article titled "A Puzzle for Parents: Good Touching or Bad?" as a guide for hug-hungry grown-ups looking to strike just the right balance. Caution: the mere pleasure of hugging a child is not sufficient reason to do so. "If adults are seeking the contact out of their own emotional . . . needs," the *Times* advises, that's "bad touching."

Why, now, has America become obsessed with child abuse in its various permutations: beating and molestation, kidnapping and abandonment? Of course these are tragedies when they occur. Despite heroic efforts by the media and social service agencies to prove otherwise, though, there's absolutely no evidence that they are any worse a problem than they were a few years ago when everyone was worried about rape and drunk driving, and there's precious little reason to hope they will be less of a problem when national attention has moved on again.

My spies at *Newsweek* tell me that as they were closing their cover story a year ago on sexual abuse of children (a scant two months after their cover story on child abduction), one editor turned to another and predicted that within a year they'd be working on "The Child Abuse Backlash." *Newsweek* hasn't gotten around to it yet, but others are working on that story now. It has two angles. First is the witch hunt aspect. The reputation of a prominent California official was dragged through the mud by a ten-year-old girl who turned out to have made up a story that he molested her at his daughter's slumber party. A Chicago businessman was convicted of trafficking in child pornography when his local drugstore photo clerk turned in snapshots he'd taken of his six-year-old daughter, fresh from her bath, playing innocently with him and his wife in their living room. Lurid tales of pedophilic orgies in a small Minnesota town evaporated before a frustrated prosecutor's eyes as children admitted they'd made most of it up. Episodes like these have given people pause.

A second concern is whether we're raising a generation of paranoids by warning kids from the tenderest age about all the horrible things that might happen to them if they let grown-ups, including their own parents, get too friendly. A special Spiderman comic distributed by the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse teaches kids to watch out for overenthusiastic baby-sitters, to be wary of new acquaintances, and to feel free about reporting Dad to the neighbors if he takes too much advantage. Perhaps unintentionally, the comic also encourages its young readers to open the window if a muscular stranger in a red-and-blue spider mask knocks asking to be let in, and to leap into his arms when he says he's going to take you to see your parents.

What puts me off about child abuse fever is not the concern that useful correctives may go too far, but the way the furnace is being stoked by grown-ups for reasons having nothing to do with the welfare of children. A lot of the graphic horror stories in the press are themselves little more than child porn, published or broadcast because editors and producers want to titillate. And when they're not being salacious, the media are being mawkish, which sells almost as well. It's an established fact, though science has been unable to explain it, that every kid who's ever been abused, molested, or kidnapped is cute as a button and possessed of both an angelic disposition

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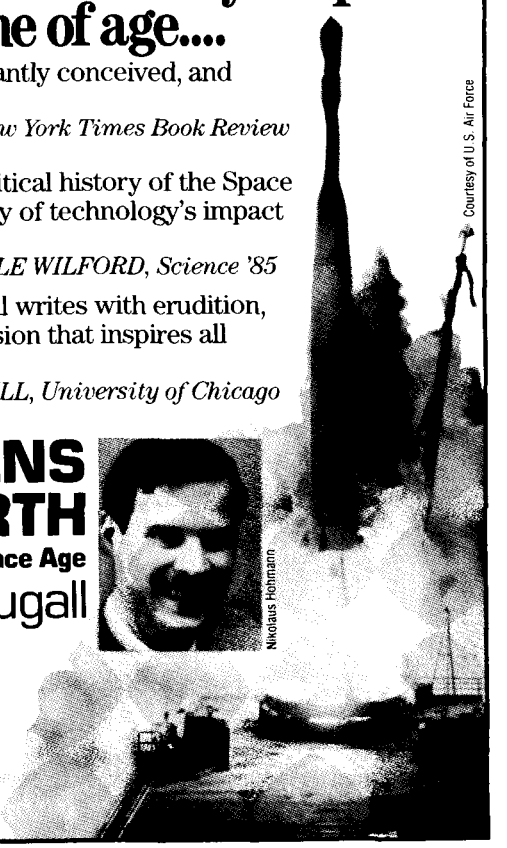

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CORRESPONDENCE

DESEGREGATION DILEMMA

To the editors:

Chester Finn's review of my book *The New American Dilemma* ("Choice and Coercion," March 11) poses the political and moral issues of school desegregation in exactly the wrong terms. Three crucial mistakes drastically misrepresent my message.

First, I do not accuse whites of "dyed-in-the-wool racism." School desegregation would be a much easier problem if schools differed only by race; white parents have good nonracial reasons for resisting (apparently) distant, dangerous, low-quality schools, and black parents hold similar views.

Second, I do not ignore black preferences. I point out that "the power of minority arguments [against some forms of school desegregation] makes opposition to desegregation no longer synonymous with racism," and I call for consideration of "minority-controlled, high quality, predominantly one-race schools."

Third, Mr. Finn's alternatives—coerced integration *versus* excellent education—poses just the *wrong* choice. My book insists that racial integration will fail unless it incorporates good education for all students. I point out that many whites accept, even endorse, desegregation plans that better educate their children. When done right, then, desegregation improves education and will eventually lessen the need for coercion.

Mr. Finn is not simply a poor reader; he miscasts my argument because we have political differences. I argue that at present, racial equity through voluntarism is unlikely, since most whites resist the political steps needed to end racial isolation and the economic steps needed to improve all schools for all students. He, in contrast, appears to believe that disparities among schools and students are so easily resolved that whites will flock to excellent ghetto schools. Would that he were right! He also thinks that because the *idea* of educational excellence is color-blind, its implementation will be too. I lack his faith. School resources are finite, so money spent on science labs in the suburbs will not be spent on remedial reading in the ghetto. It is disingenuous to pretend that the current drive for "excellence" substitutes for the older drive for "equity."

Thus I do *not* urge coerced integration regardless of preferences or outcomes; I do argue that *if* desegregation is to work, we must mandate both participation and educational change. If we are unwilling to do it right, we should give it up and do something else. We face hard choices, but not the loaded and wrongheaded ones that Mr. Finn attributes to me.

JENNIFER HOCHSCHILD
Assistant Professor of Politics & Public Affairs
Princeton, New Jersey

Chester Finn replies:

Professor Hochschild misrepresents her own book. It is precisely because she finds so much of American society suffused with racism that she abandons hope for desegregation via democratic means and seizes upon "authoritative" alternatives. As for her attention to black preferences, the idea of "high quality, predominantly one-race schools" turns out to be one of her straw men, an alternative that she conjures in order to dismiss.

Of course she wants her coercively integrated schools also to provide good education. Nobody favors bad education. Our differences lie elsewhere. I can tolerate the prospect of a society that "merely" supplies good schools for every youngster and that removes obstacles to voluntary integration (and other forms of educational choice). Professor Hochschild, by contrast, will not rest content until every classroom is a racial microcosm of the nation, even if achieving that result means obliging a great many people to attend schools they do not like and jettisoning the central precepts of a liberal democracy.

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SYMBOLISM AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

An administration that ordinarily excels at imagery and symbolism has made an unbelievable—and yet revealing—botch of President Reagan's trip to Germany for the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II. Are Reagan and his aides really so ignorant and insensitive that they see the war and the Holocaust entirely in terms of public relations? Whatever Reagan's final itinerary, the images this episode will leave to history will be not of Reagan but of Michael Deaver, the White House advance man, roaming the German countryside in search of just the right death camp and just the right cemetery in order to please the Jews and please the Germans and minimize everybody's displeasure at what's being done to please the others.

Obviously, this is not the right way to mark an important anniversary. Yes, the occasion calls for ceremonies of remembrance and reconciliation. These are, by their nature, symbolic gestures. But the administration, obsessed with what the evening television news will report, confuses symbolism with public relations. Instead of making a gesture they think morally appropriate, Reagan and his advisers care only about making gestures that will please sundry constituencies. And then, when the image-making process itself causes a public uproar, the solution is yet more public relations gestures. At this point, any symbolic ceremonial actions Reagan might take are hopelessly compromised.

In November, according to former White House communications director David Gergen, Chancellor Helmut Kohl made an emotional plea for Reagan to visit a German war cemetery, and Reagan accepted. Then in February Reagan announced that he would not visit a concentration camp. This, and not the proposed visit to a German cemetery, was Reagan's great mistake. Furthermore, once the decision was announced, it was impossible to reverse without making a concentration camp visit seem like a shallow political gesture rather than an act of moral witness.

But before changing his mind, Reagan compounded the original error with a remarkable statement revealing how shallow his feelings about the greatest horror of the 20th century actually run. Called on to explain his decision at his March 21 press conference, he stated that the German people have "a guilt feeling that's been imposed on them, and I think it's unnecessary." He said he was not interested in "reawakening the memories and so forth."

On April 11 the president's complete itinerary was announced, including the stop at the Bitburg military cemetery. And suddenly White House officials became nervous about the reaction of the American public, particularly Jews. According to Lou Cannon of *The Washington Post*, the White House chief of staff took a classic public relations approach: "Regan decided to wait and see how it played on the networks." In the event, it played badly. And so began Michael Deaver's week in Germany that ended with the April 19 decision to include the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in the president's itinerary. The same day, Reagan honored Elie Wiesel with the Congressional Gold Medal at the White House, and made an emotional speech about the Nazi "crime against humanity."

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Given the pattern of reversals over the president's trip, one must conclude that Reagan's own feelings about the events of 1939-45, whatever they are, have not weighed very heavily in the affair. Reagan must remember April 1945, when a BBC correspondent began a famous dispatch from Bergen-Belsen with the words, "It is my duty to report something beyond the imagination of mankind." In April 1985, however, Bergen-Belsen has become a name for Reagan to throw to American Jews and veterans, as part of the game of special interest politics. The Holocaust, it seems, is beyond his imagination. It is too dreary and unpleasant a subject for such a cheerful, upbeat man.

If it hadn't been for the disastrous back-and-forth over visiting a concentration camp, Reagan's proposed visit to the Bitburg cemetery would have stirred much less fuss. It is not wrong to honor the German soldiers who fell during the Second World War. Yes, that war was exceptional, even among wars, for the evil one side represented. But even in Hitler's war, most of the German soldiers—like most soldiers on both sides of all wars—were drafted or recruited or, at worst, swept up in a naive enthusiasm for the cause in which they fought and died. But history does not support the distinction between the SS on the one hand and the army on the other. (See Daniel Goldhagen's article on page 16.)

President Reagan was correct in saying, on April 18, that most of the young soldiers buried at Bitburg were victims of Nazism. If he'd stopped right there, he would have been on firm ground. But he went on to say that these soldiers who died defending an evil cause were victims "just as surely as" the millions of noncombatants who were scientifically murdered in the concentration camps, which suggests, once again, a remarkable moral obtuseness.

Then, too, the White House advance team might have found a more appropriate cemetery, one that did not contain graves of SS troops (47 out of 2,000 buried there), who were by no stretch of the imagination innocent victims. (The advance team merely asked German officials whether there was anything "embarrassing" about Bitburg. The Germans said no.) On the other hand, the search for "just the right" German cemetery denies the complications of history and illustrates the empty vulgarity of the whole exercise.

In the end, a president who lives by public relations will perish by public relations. Ronald Reagan has backed himself into a nasty trap of his own devising. Furthermore, the episode has turned into a marvelous propaganda opportunity for the Soviets, who have been pushing the theme of German revanchism since last summer, and will be thrilled to have pictures of Kohl and Reagan near SS graves. For that reason, if no other, Reagan might be wise to cancel the Bitburg visit, regardless of what Chancellor Kohl might think. But whatever Reagan does now, and whatever he says about the war and the Holocaust, will be perceived as yet another case of pandering to one or the other special interest. It's an impossible quandary for him, and one he richly deserves.

NOTEBOOK

□ GUESS WHO is going to Berlin, to bear witness on behalf of the victims of "fascism," and to protest President Reagan's visit to the Nazi cemetery at Bitburg? It's the great ambulance chaser of American politics, Jesse Jackson, planning his ultimate grotesquerie. The last person with a claim to speak for victims of the Holocaust, surely, is the man who said a few years ago that he was tired of hearing about the Holocaust. Jackson is also the man who brought that pernicious anti-Semite, Louis Farrakhan, to prominence, and refused to repudiate him until months after his outrages had begun. Farrakhan called Hitler a great man. Jackson will now express his solidarity with the great man's victims. A more shameful act of hypocritical opportunism is hard to imagine.

□ WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, Part 923. Chatting with reporters in Los Angeles, Democratic Party chairman Paul Kirk said maybe Congress should debate some kind of reduction in Social Security benefits for high-income people, and maybe Congress ought to consider an across-the-board budget freeze, including Social Security cost-of-living allowances. Now, you may like these ideas or you may not. We like the first, but not the second. The only way to make a serious dent in the federal deficit is to cut entitlement programs, and upper-income beneficiaries certainly ought to bear the largest burden. Our own policy choice would be to make Social Security benefits fully taxable. The burden of this reform would rise with income, and there would be no burden at all on those who actually live on their Social Security payments, because their incomes are too small to be taxed. In contrast, the sort of half-freeze on cost-of-living allowances proposed by the Republicans amounts to a real reduction in benefits for everyone, including the poorest. The merits aside, though, what's depressing is that Chairman Kirk was immediately forced to repudiate his remark, after the gaffe lights had lit up all over Capitol Hill. "I was wrong," he declared within hours. Wrong, that is, to suggest that any changes in Social Security should even be *considered*. Now, everyone is agreed that the Democrats need good new ideas. Perhaps Social Security reform isn't one of them. But good ideas don't drop from heaven fully formed, tested, pre-sold to the public, and wrapped in a bow. They emerge from an intellectual turmoil that inevitably involves some bad ideas as well. If the Democrats are so afraid of being associated with bad ideas that they stifle all debate before it can start, they'll never get the good new ideas they need.

□ THE EXPERTS say that if you add up all the component parts of CBS, Inc.—the network, the television stations, the record division, and so on—they're worth about $5.8 billion, or $200 a share. This makes Ted Turner's offer of something less than $175 a share, mostly in funny money

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A Tax On Life Insurance?

3 out of 4 Americans Say It's Not Fair

As part of the plan to change our federal income tax laws, some people in Washington propose taxing life insurance. They want to tax the increased value of a policy as it grows each year.

What do the American people think of this proposal?

In a recently completed national survey by Yankelovich, Skelly and White, consumers expressed their views on the proposed tax:

- 75 percent said that the tax on the increase in the value of a life insurance policy would be unfair because it would tax people on money they do not actually receive and could not receive without reducing their life insurance protection or canceling it altogether.
- 79 percent said that the proposed tax is unfair because it would penalize people who are trying to protect their own children and families.
- And 82 percent said that, since the cash surrender value grows each year, the tax on it would be greater as one gets older, and this would be unfair to older people.

It is a fact that this new tax would cost a typical policyholder (a 35-year-old married man with a $40,000 policy) about $5,800 in extra taxes in his lifetime.

We, too, believe this proposed new income tax is unfair. We urge the Administration and members of Congress not to tax Americans for protecting their families.

American Council of Life Insurance

1850 K Street NW, Washington DC 20006

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known as "junk bonds," look less than generous. But why, then, was CBS selling for only $72 a share as recently as the beginning of this year? Even on April 24, after Turner's offer, the share price was only $110, because the market suspects CBS's management will succeed in thwarting Turner's offer. We don't relish the thought of Ted Turner owning one of the major networks, but the moral indignation his offer has aroused seems oddly misplaced. What does it say about the great conglomerate corporations that tower over the American economy that one of them should be worth almost three times as much dead as alive?

□ EVERY DAY'S PAPER brings another article planted by some interest group threatened by tax reform. On Sunday, April 21, *The New York Times* reported that the proposed reforms would be "disastrous" for rental housing, especially for poor people in major cities, according to various authorities. On Monday, April 22, the *Times* carried the charge that the reforms would be bad for small business. It's true that the Treasury's proposals would curtail various subsidies, deductions, and tax shelters for apartment buildings. A more important truth is that giving tax breaks to owners of capital is a pretty stupid way to help poor people in need of housing. These tax breaks have helped many real estate magnates to afford luxury co-ops in New York City. Whether they have enabled any poor people to afford rental apartments there is more dubious. As for "small" businesses, which the Treasury plan would tax at the same rate as large businesses, the point to remember is that small corporations are not owned by small people. The typical owner of a small company is likely to be richer than the typical owner of, say, shares in General Motors, and there's no reason why a small business shouldn't pay the same proportionate tax on its profits.

□ REAGANOMICS, Part 419. The April 29 *Newsweek* carries a horrifying sequence of color pictures showing a Nicaraguan prisoner being murdered by the *contras*. The pictures were taken by a 21-year-old American named Frank Wohl, described by *Newsweek* as a "conservative activist from Northwestern University." Wohl had spent months traveling with the *contras*, whom he referred to as "we" in discussing the decision to kill the prisoner. Wohl's own decision to sell his pictures to *Newsweek* apparently was based on the fact that *Newsweek* offered more money than *Time*. Wohl refused to discuss the details with a reporter because he "doesn't make any money off of these interviews, just the photos." Thus the true voice of Reaganism. The publication of these photos did tremendous damage to the cause Reagan and young Mr. Wohl support. But a "conservative activist" can hardly be blamed for acting on his own principles.

□ NEOCON PUNK: The song is called "America" and its first refrain goes like this: "Communism is just a word / But if the government turns over / It's the only word that's heard." Merle Haggard? Anita Bryant? No. Here's more: "Little sister making minimum wage / Living in a one-room jungle monkey cage / Can't get over, she's almost dead / She may not be in the black but she's happy she ain't in the red." Give up? It's Prince. On his new album the little satyr finds room in his world of sleaze and sex for a warning about the dangers of totalitarianism. Conservatives were happy to embrace Bruce Springsteen, but what will they make of this?

□ FORTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "The victory was a magnificent achievement, concerning which the Allied nations have a right to be proud. It demanded foresight, dedication, sacrifice. On the part of Americans in particular, the organization and expenditure of the necessary effort required an imaginative appreciation of larger issues which was not reinforced by the near approach of the enemy to our homes, or by any dramatization of peril like that which comes from raiding bombers or long-range guns. We all may legitimately express a certain measure of elation." (The Editors, "Victory in Europe," May 14, 1945.)

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

STANDING PAT

CONTRARY to the latest press accounts of intrigue at the White House, Patrick J. Buchanan has not won any power struggles since he became President Reagan's communications director last February. He's influential, for sure, but not because he's following conventional practice and building a bureaucratic empire. Rather than fight to keep the Office of Public Liaison under his control, he blithely agreed to donate two-thirds of it (24 out of 36 positions) to Edward J. Rollins, the White House political boss. Who needs all these slots that don't have anything to do with communications? Not me, Buchanan concluded. And the transfer was set. Max Friedersdorf and John Svahn, the two other senior lieutenants of Donald Regan, the White House chief of staff, even endorsed this arrangement.

What undid it was not a change of heart by Buchanan. When the proposal was broached with Regan, Buchanan said how happy he was with it. Regan wasn't, though. "I think it all ought to go under communications," he declared. Buchanan hastily backpedaled. "That's a terrific idea," he said. And so it was that Buchanan won what the press has billed as a major turf fight.

Buchanan is not to be confused with St. Francis of Assisi. He is in real life exactly as he appeared on TV chat shows: a fiercely combative conservative ideologue. As such, he relishes the only kind of influence that matters at the White House, the ear of the president and of the chief

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of staff. You get this kind of influence through steady access, and Buchanan has that. Having a lot of boxes on your organizational chart doesn't bring clout. Svahn heads the domestic policy bureaucracy, on paper more weighty than Buchanan's operation, yet his influence is nil.

You also have to have something to say. Friedersdorf, the chief congressional lobbyist, can't match Buchanan's sway in the White House because he's a technician. He doesn't have a strong ideological message to convey, relentlessly, as Buchanan does. And both Reagan and Regan are receptive to the Buchanan message, within limits. "You ought to see the eye contact between the president and Buchanan whenever Pat is speaking," said a senior official. "It's amazing. They're simpatico. And Buchanan is always impressive at meetings. He's organized, he's brief, he's forceful, he doesn't ramble. That's what the president likes."

PATRICK J. BUCHANAN BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Buchanan and Regan are pretty chummy too, though Regan scarcely knew the guy when he hired him. Buchanan was first recommended to Regan during a meeting with strategists from the Reagan reelection campaign last January, several weeks before Regan switched jobs from treasury secretary to White House chief of staff. One campaign strategist, speech writer Kenneth Khachigian, suggested Buchanan. About the same time, Buchanan's sister Bay, who had been treasurer of the United States under Regan, conferred with her old boss and offered the same advice. Then she cajoled her brother into calling Regan, ostensibly to brief him on the perils of the White House as he had learned them as a speech writer for Richard Nixon.

When Buchanan called, the conversation didn't dwell long on perils. Instead, Regan asked Buchanan if he'd consider the communications job. A few days later, Buchanan accepted, he and Regan having talked no more than an hour, total. Regan's lone condition was that Buchanan would have to support whatever policies the president decided on, even if Buchanan didn't like them. This was no problem for Buchanan; he had accepted the same condition in the Nixon White House. Besides, he told Regan that he agreed with Reagan 95 percent of the time, which was a lot more than he ever agreed with Nixon.

The best measure of Buchanan's influence with Regan was the Linda Chavez affair. Chavez was the staff director of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, a Hispanic, a Democrat, and a former liberal. Conservative activists were eager for her to replace Faith Whittlesey as director of the public liaison office, which preaches the Reagan line to interest groups and minorities and attempts to mobilize them as supporters. In fact, conservatives were overeager. They leaked her name to the press. They called Regan's office. They arranged for Chavez to sit at Regan's table at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington. The result: Regan was insulted that anyone would think he'd succumb to such a crass campaign. And he scratched her from the list of contenders.

But not for long. "Pat turned the thing around," said a White House official. "If it weren't for him, she wouldn't have gotten the job. He persuaded Regan." Why did Buchanan want her in the liaison post? She is young (37), aggressive, and very ideological. Buchanan knew an ally when he saw one. Several Republican women were considered—Regan announced early on that he wanted a woman in the job—but the GOP credential was no asset. Buchanan wanted someone with fervor for conservative dogma, not a political party.

Well before Buchanan won the Chavez fight in April, he was being proclaimed in newspaper reports as the second most powerful White House aide, after Regan. "Are you really number two or is it number one-and-a-half?" Regan asked him at a staff meeting. Regan was joking, but Buchanan answered seriously. "That was a setup," he said, implying that the press was raising him up only to knock him down. Maybe so, but the press reports of his rising influence were accurate.

In the weeks after he got to the White House, Buchanan

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had a string of triumphs. He urged Reagan to veto a farm bailout bill, which Reagan did. He said Reagan should ignore the well-publicized shoving match involving a Korean dissident, and Reagan did that. He made sure that Reagan's speeches had a tougher conservative edge, especially on the subject of Central America. He managed this not by inserting fiery passages and right-wing buzzwords, but merely by passing the speech writers' texts on to Reagan without bowdlerizing them, as his predecessors had done.

IN GENERAL, Buchanan's advice is that a president should not back down, an associate says. He argued that Reagan should stick with his controversial visit to the Bitburg cemetery in Germany, if only because the president had given "his word of honor" that he would go there. Another example. Buchanan argued that Reagan's strong endorsement of military aid for the *contras* in Nicaragua had pushed the president to the edge of a high diving board. As Buchanan described it, every adviser but Buchanan wanted the president to back up and walk down the stairs, as the whole world watched. Buchanan wanted him to dive off: that is, to speak on national television in favor of giving guns and ammo to the *contras*. The most optimistic count showed Reagan trailing by 30 votes in the House, but Buchanan thought the fight was winnable. No one else at the White House thought so, however, including Reagan. So the speech was scratched.

Buchanan and his small band of allies at the White House consoled themselves with the thought that, within weeks, their advice would be vindicated. Reagan, at least, will come to regret having backed away from a fight over military aid, they say. They believe that the next time the *contra* issue comes up, perhaps in the fall, Reagan will side with Buchanan. And maybe he will, for by then Michael Deaver, an adviser to Reagan for 19 years, will be gone from the White House, gone to make a fortune in Washington PR. Now that James Baker and Richard Darman have left for the Treasury Department, Deaver is the last of the so-called "pragmatists"at the White House. Buchanan's associates talk as if Deaver's departure will begin a new era, A.D., an era in which Buchanan can really flex his ideological muscles. "It'll be an enormous change," said a White House official. "Pat is being very cautious until Deaver leaves, biding his time, going slow."

But happy days for Buchanan A.D. are probably an illusion. His real opposition isn't Deaver, but the White House press corps. Some reporters, knowing of Buchanan's small regard for the press, were upset when he was appointed. "Why did you appoint him if, in fact, he sees the press as an enemy?" ABC's Sam Donaldson asked Regan. And Washington pressies are even madder now. My distinguished "White House Watch" predecessor, Morton Kondracke, now Washington bureau chief of Newsweek and a panelist with Buchanan for three years on the "McLaughlin Group" television show, was taken aback when Buchanan recently brushed aside one of his questions with "No comment—and that's off-the-record."

At least Buchanan talked briefly with Kondracke. Most reporters can't get to him at all. They resent this. When Regan announced Chavez's appointment in early April and noted that she would report to Buchanan, a reporter asked, "Does this mean that Mr. Buchanan will have time to return our phone calls?" That's up to Buchanan, Regan said. And reporters were not mollified.

Buchanan may delight in snubbing the press, but he's only hurting himself. For any official in Washington, there aren't many things more important than having a reservoir of goodwill with reporters. When trouble hits, the official can tap this. Look what happened in the case of Baker, who has better dealings with reporters than nearly anyone in the Reagan circle. When he was fingered as a possible participant in the Debategate scandal, you might have predicted story after story exploring his role. Practically none appeared, however, because reporters gave Baker, whom they relied on for information, the benefit of the doubt.

This is a benefit Buchanan won't get if he continues to ignore reporters and delight in it. He has no reservoir of goodwill—quite the opposite. One prominent Republican strategist predicts that, within six months, Buchanan "will be the biggest target in the Reagan administration. He's setting himself up as the bad guy in the eyes of the press. For a White House official, wishing the media constituency away is as absurd as a congressman saying voters don't matter. It's a constituency you have to handle."

Buchanan's side of this is that reporters don't need another source at the White House, and he can't do his job if he's on the phone all day answering press queries. He has a point here, but only a theoretical one. If he gets into trouble and the press is pursuing him madly, it will be mighty small consolation.

FRED BARNES

A step away from war.

CONTRA DANCE

IF U.S. TROOPS wind up going to war in Central America (which a recent classified Reagan administration report calls an "eventual option"), historians will look back and wonder why anyone was surprised. The escalation and militarization of U.S. policy toward Nicaragua after the Sandinista revolution of July 1979 will be seen as steady and unambiguous. A simple fact, often dismissed as exaggerated or paranoid, will in retrospect seem obvious: the Reagan administration embarked on its Central American policy with a very clear goal in mind: the removal of the Sandinista regime. What will seem puzzling is why it took so long for a solid majority of public opinion

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and substantial bipartisan opposition in Congress to even deflect the course of this policy. It will be clear not only that the opponents of the Reagan policy were mostly blind to the goals of the Reagan administration, but that they were hampered by a lack of clarity about their own goals for Central America. Indeed, if U.S. troops do *not* wind up at war in Nicaragua, historians will conclude that it was a very close call.

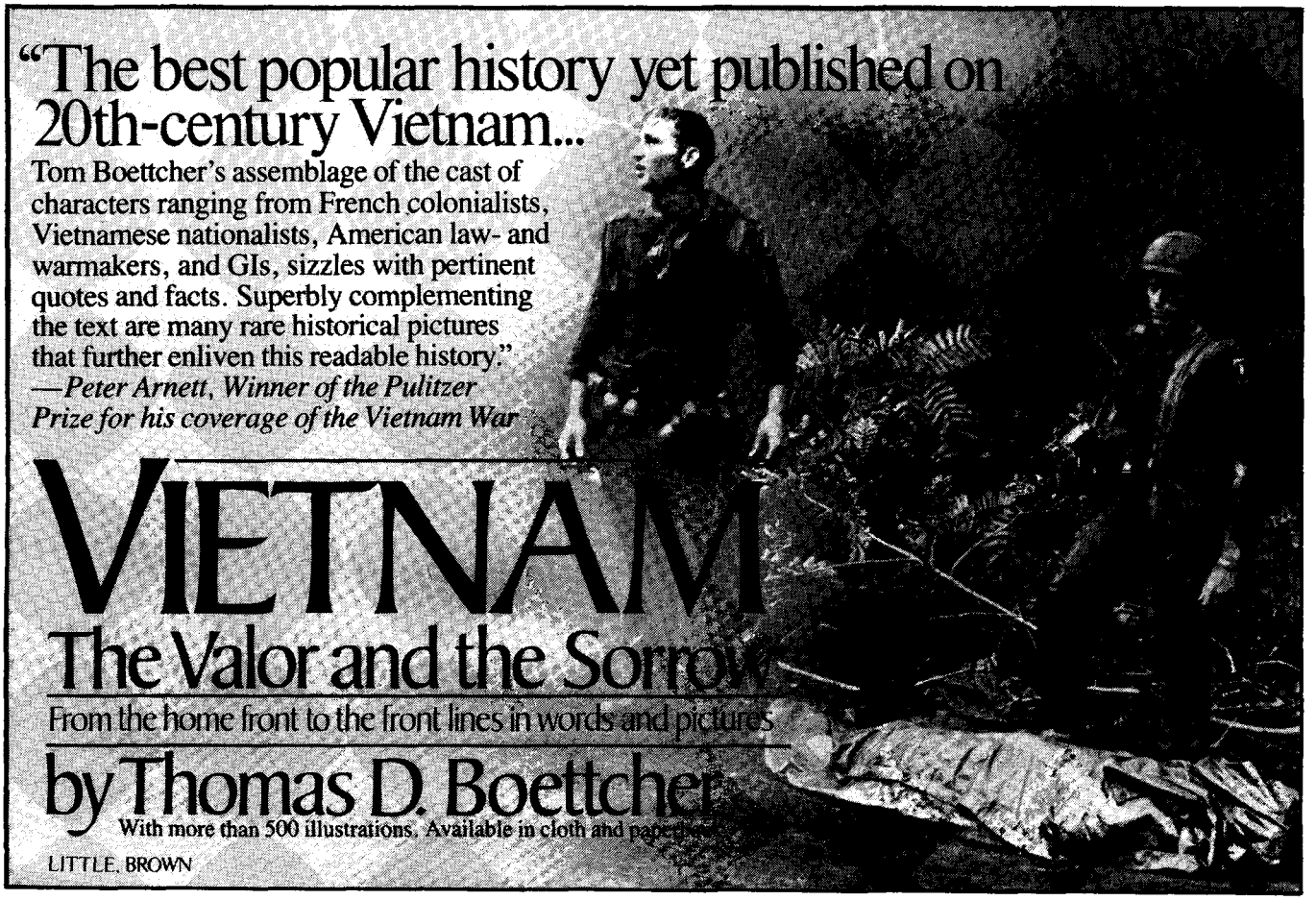
The April 24 congressional vote on aid to the *contras* did not change this situation dramatically, despite the conclusions of many commentators. The struggle was said to be an overall defeat for the Reagan policy, but in fact it was only the most marginal loss. Reagan originally had proposed $14 million in military aid, to be used only for "humanitarian" purposes for 60 days while the possibility of negotiations between the rebels and the Nicaraguan government was pursued. In the face of certain defeat Reagan dropped that plan, and the *contra* dance began.

Reagan asked for $14 million in "humanitarian" aid to be distributed by the CIA. Senate Democrats proposed that some other agency distribute the money. The House voted down the Reagan plan, but the Senate approved it, mainly on the votes of ten Senate Democrats who accepted Reagan's vague last-minute promise to set up "thorough procedures" for monitoring the use of the money. As this issue went to press, Congress was preparing to vote on a Republican bill to distribute the money through the Agency for International Development and a Democratic bill to distribute the money through the International Red Cross.

The most important issue in the legislative maneuvering was how much control the administration would have over the money. But even if the Democratic bill wins in the House and removes control of the money from the U.S. government, the White House has won a modest victory. Compare what Congress did in 1985 with what it did in 1984. Last year Congress cut off *all* aid to the *contras* by a narrow margin. This year everyone favored providing aid, albeit "humanitarian." The preferred interpretation is that narrowing "military" to "humanitarian" is a defeat for Reagan. But if conservatives are shrewd, they will thank the Democrats for blessing their policy as "humanitarian" and continue to pursue it.

That will be more difficult than in the past, mainly because administration policy is viewed suspiciously now, even by Republicans in Congress. But the Democratic victory is a fragile one. In practical terms "humanitarian" is an unobjectionable yet flexible term. "Humanitarian" aid may not be all that the *contras* and their U.S. backers wanted, but it is more than they were receiving before the vote. The administration has eluded the clutches of congressional language before. It may do so again.

The Republican Party platform of 1980 was the first statement of Reagan's intentions toward the Sandinistas. "We will support the efforts of the Nicaraguan people to establish a free and independent government," the platform announced. In November 1981 Reagan decided that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the definition of "Nicaraguan people" was a group of several hundred former Somoza regime National Guardsmen living in Honduras, and "support" meant $19 million in covert CIA aid. The various congressional oversight committees lived up to their name by overlooking the administration's stated goal of helping to "establish" a government in Nicaragua. The idea that the administration's real purpose was to alter the structure of the Nicaraguan government was dismissed. Congress preferred to accept the claim of CIA director William Casey that the money was solely for the "interdiction" of arms shipped from Nicaragua to the guerrillas in El Salvador.

Casey was either a fool or a liar. It took almost two years before the *contras* claimed their first—and to date, only—interdiction. In September 1983 they took credit for blowing up a warehouse in northwestern Nicaragua that, according to Sam Dillon of *The Miami Herald*, was used by local smugglers to ship arms by boat to El Salvador. Congress, meanwhile, was slowly catching on to the administration's ruse. In December 1982 it unanimously approved the Boland amendment, prohibiting the use of any money "for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua."

But the Boland amendment debate did not stop the administration from revising and expanding its job description for the *contras*. In 1983 Reagan said the *contras* had the broader purpose of putting "pressure" on the Sandinistas. Interdiction, it seems, had served as a prelude to the slightly more ambitious policy of "pressure." Disturbed by the continuing trend, Congress in the summer of 1984 voted to cut off all aid to the *contras*.

In the debate that ensued, Reagan redefined his aims once again. In February he said that the *contras'* goal was to "alter the structure" of the Sandinista government. And now the *contras*, who went for a year without any U.S. aid at all, have obtained "humanitarian" aid.

ONE REASON the Democrats have had so much trouble stopping the drift toward war, and still may not have stopped it, is that they are as uncertain about their goals as the administration is certain. Moderate Democrats seem to dream that Daniel Ortega will gradually turn into a neoliberal, announcing his conversion to Western-style parliamentary democracy and his conviction that "while New Deal-type social programs are needed, government cannot solve all our problems." Ortega has declined to fulfill this fantasy.

The failure of the impossible to occur has put the Democrats on the defensive. Representative Michael Barnes, one of the administration's leading critics, told *The Washington Post* on April 15 that "the Sandinistas have done some incredibly stupid things. If the vote were on whether you like the Sandinistas, it'd be 20-to-1 for the *contras*. But that's not the issue, and that's well understood here in Congress."

But surely the repressive actions that Barnes regards as "incredibly stupid" are ones the Sandinistas regard as tactically prudent or even ideologically correct. U.S. military officials say it would take years before the *contras*—on their own—could topple the Sandinistas. This means that Barnes and other Democrats are right to suspect that aid to the *contras*, if it is to accomplish anything, will require deeper U.S. military involvement. But it also means that the Sandinistas will remain in power doing the things that so anger Republicans and frustrate Democrats: retaining Cuban and Soviet advisers, harassing the opposition, censoring the press, and so on.

This prospect has paralyzed the Democrats. They need to make three things clear, among themselves and to the public. First, war itself has human rights implications. The Democrats have let the partisans of the "eventual option" discuss the full-scale war that would be needed to secure a *contra* victory as if it were an abstract step in solving a quadratic equation rather than the human catastrophe it would surely be.

Second, in important respects the Sandinistas' human rights record is far superior to that of other governments in the region. According to the State Department annual human rights reports, death squads in El Salvador were responsible for 46 civilian killings per *month* in the second half of 1984. In Nicaragua in 1984 "there is credible evidence that the military and security forces were responsible" for the deaths of *six* detained civilians in the entire *year*. ("It is estimated that many more [deaths] went unreported," the report adds vaguely.) Nicaragua has one opposition newspaper publishing under censorship. This is one more opposition paper than either El Salvador or Guatemala has publishing under any circumstances. The ways in which the Sandinista regime is worse than others in the area are primarily prospective. Their ambitions to dominate civil life are greater than those of the brutal military regimes, and their contempt for freedom of expression is more systematic. Democrats shouldn't attempt to deny this, only to stress that on balance the situation there is not terrible.

Third, the administration has enjoyed a relatively free ride on what the consequences of a *contra* victory would be, even ignoring the intervening war. Democrats might cite those disenchanted with the *contras* as skillfully as the administration has cited those disenchanted with the Sandinistas. Edgar Chamorro, a *contra* political leader who was selected by the CIA and later ousted for criticizing rebel assassinations, told *Newsweek* that the *contras* only "want to return to the way things were before. Many want to settle accounts [with the Sandinistas] because they lost the war."

The Democrats would do best to stress what can be gained from the current situation. The United States need not go to war to obtain the removal of all foreign advisers from Nicaragua, an enforceable Sandinista pledge not to establish foreign military bases, and verifiable guarantees of no military intervention in neighboring countries. That may seem like a modest achievement. But the most important compromise we have to make in Nicaragua is with our own ambitions to achieve more.

JEFFERSON MORLEY

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Private enterprise to the rescue.

DEAR CONTRA FAN

To: Richard Viguerie
From: Creative Department
Re: Contra Funding

Now that President Reagan's latest request for Contra aid has been shot down by the radical-liberals in Congress, the role of the private sector in raising money for our Freedom-Fighting brothers in Nicaragua is even more urgent. As per your request, here's a smorgasbord of fund-raising ideas and sample appeals. It's our belief that a multifaceted, multimedia approach—correctly targeted to our demographics—is our best bet. In any case, we have to move fast.

Approach #1: The Tearjerker

The most obvious approach is to borrow themes used so successfully by groups such as Save the Children Federation. Here are some excerpts from a draft letter along these lines that we've worked up.

Dear Friend:

Tonight, somewhere in the hills of Nicaragua, Eduardo Callende will cry himself to sleep. . . . Like the 15,000 other Contras struggling against oppression, Eduardo hasn't had a decent meal since Congress cut off funding last year to the Contras. . . . His days are long and demanding. Up at dawn to kidnap corrupt Sandinista politicians, he then has to spend hours in chilly coastal waters planting mines. . . . By late evening, after knifing a civilian spy or two, young Eduardo has only a few moments to spend around the campfire with his fellow heroes. . . . Eduardo has never had a paper route . . . been to a ball game . . . or tasted an ice-cream cone. . . . Yet, while undernourished, poorly equipped, outnumbered, he and the other Contras are now on the verge of toppling the Sandinistas.

Won't you please help?

Thank you,
Pat Boone, Honorary Chairman
Save The Contras Federation

Approach #2: The Rabble-Rouser

On the other hand, a harder sell might be necessary given all the recent publicity about Contra atrocities. Here's a letter we've drafted:

Dear Concerned American:

Do you want Communist SANDINISTAS performing ABORTIONS on your CHILDREN in our PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

Do you want to see your *churches and synagogues* BURNED TO THE GROUND by Marxist TERRORISTS?

If you answer "NO" then read on, my friend.

These shocking scenarios aren't the product of some Hollywood scriptwriter—they are reality in today's Nicaragua. AND THEY COULD HAPPEN HERE—IF THE SANDINISTAS ARE NOT STOPPED SOON!

But I have sad news: *Congress won't help.* That's right—*despite* the pleas of President Reagan and scores of Christians, CONGRESS HAS CUT OFF ALL MONEY TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS!

So, if we're to stop Sandinistas and their Soviet masters from taking over Latin America, *you* must help. It's our only chance to preserve a world where no American schoolchild is *forced* to RECITE "DAS KAPITAL" and SPIT ON THE AMERICAN FLAG!

Our last, best chance to preserve democracy in the Western hemisphere rests on these Contras. *President Reagan* has called them "our brothers" and *"the moral equivalent of the Founding Fathers."* Although their leaders' names may sound unfamiliar to you—Bermudez and Calero—they are indeed the George Washingtons and Ben Franklins of our time, taking a stand for democracy.

For only 70¢ a day—*less than the amount you spend on coffee and a donut*—you can help these brave men lead their country to freedom. *The money will go only for food, clothing, medicine and other necessities,* such as small howitzers needed for self-defense and legal costs to fight trumped-up "rape" charges.

If you *don't* help now, the liberal media and their far-left comrades in Congress will see their dream come true: *the triumph of their Sandinista pals over Nicaragua's democratic forces.* And, for us at home, that means that *the ultimate takeover* of the U.S. Government by Communists and their fellow travelers—*homosexuals, abortionists, feminists, black power militants, Secular Humanists—will be that much closer to reality!*

Will you help the Contras in their struggle *against* tyranny and *for* the American Way of Life? Or will you stand by idly as Communism triumphs and the sad day comes closer when Sandinista and Soviet troops take over *your* neighborhood? The answer is up to you.

Thank you,
Charlton Heston, Honorary Chairman
Americans for Freedom

YES, I want to help the Contras fight for Democracy and my way of life!

( ) Enclosed is my first month's payment of $21.

( ) I can't send money now, but I will send a threatening letter to my Congressman telling him to support the Contras.

( ) I can't send money now, but I will volunteer to kill Sandinistas and their sympathizers.

( ) Other.

Approach #3: The Franklin Mint Model

Our natural constituency of patriots often enjoys collecting American memorabilia, such as those statuettes of Civil and Revolutionary War soldiers offered by the Franklin Mint company. Why not use this same technique to raise money for the Contras? Here's our suggested copy:

DECORATE YOUR HOME—WHILE SAVING DEMOCRACY

The Minutemen of Valley Forge . . . G. I. Joe Fighting the Japs and the Nazis . . . and the Contras battling Sandinista tyranny in Nicaragua. What do they have in common? They're all heroes who shed blood to preserve America's freedoms. So, if you love America, then you'll love this latest special offering from Freedom Mint: lifelike bronzed statuettes of Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters.

These detailed, bronze sculptures commemorate the highlights of the ongoing struggle against Sandinista oppression. For only $19.95 a month, Freedom Mint will send you a new sculpture *each month* illustrating another exciting facet of the Contra struggle. Remember the thrilling mining of Nicara-

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gua's ports in early 1984? Well, that's just the *first* sculpture we'll send you. You'll see daring Contra frogmen descend from a speedboat—and it'll look so real, you'll want to run for cover! The next month, you'll be delighted by an authentic-looking representation of a Contra rebel "beating sense" into a recalcitrant Marxist spy. You can buy as few or as many of the sculptures as you want—but we think you'll want to get all 12.

And you'll be helping the Contras *themselves* in their fight for freedom. Yes, it's true—the money you send to Freedom Mint will be sent directly to the valiant 15,000 Contras waging war against the Sandinistas. Your purchases will enable this struggle to go on. In doing so, you're not only helping to defeat Communism in Nicaragua, but saving over 100 million other "south-of-the-border" neighbors from Soviet-backed domination as well.

So, don't you want to preserve democracy while beautifying your home? If your answer is "yes," your first sculpture will be mailed to you immediately, and you'll be granted a *free 10-day trial period* to examine it in *your own home*. If you're not completely satisfied, we'll refund your donation cheerfully.

ACT NOW!

Sincerely,
Gen. William Westmoreland (Ret.), Chairman
Freedom Mint

We've also devised some other fund-raising schemes that we believe will be effective:

Approach #4: A "Celebrity" Roast

We believe that Dean Martin, a longtime supporter of President Reagan, would be glad to round up his Hollywood buddies for one of his patented "roasts" of a Contra leader. The gag-a-minute atmosphere will help "humanize" and popularize the "roastee," Enrique Bermudez, the military commander of the U.S.-backed Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN). As Don Rickles quips, "Hey Enrique, baby, blow up any refineries lately?" to gales of celebrity laughter, Bermudez's image as a "regular American" will surely be enhanced. (Confidential: Pat Buchanan tells me he'll whip up a few jokes for Bermudez, *gratis*.)

Approach #5: U.S.A. for Africa Model

We should emulate the smash success of "We Are the World." Our idea is to appeal to the hard-core patriot audience in Sunbelt states, with a "Country for Contras" song using Nashville superstars. Barbara Mandrell, Charlie Pride, George Jones, Alabama, and Tammy Wynette have already expressed interest. Best of all, Conway Twitty has already penned a song we can use, called "We Are The Contras." Sample lyric: "We are the Contras/We are the Victims/So let's stop talking/And let's start killing."

Approach #6: Movie and TV Shows

Left-wingers like Jane Fonda have been especially adept at popularizing their anti-American ideology in such films as "The China Syndrome," "Missing," and "Apocalypse Now." We haven't had much success like that in either TV or movies. Here are some suggested ideas that could help build support for the Contras. Some highlights:

"My Three Contras"—In this adventure-comedy TV pilot, Robert Young stars as a widowed father who agrees to take in three wacky teenage Contras visiting America for a year of fund-raising. Their stirring tales of Freedom-Fighting win the admiration of their new high school pals, but their misadventures with the opposite sex and visits to a local munitions factory create uproariously funny cultural clashes. (Sample repartee: Policeman: "Son, you're accused of rape." Contra youth: "Rape? What rape? . . . I didn't even get to first base with her!")

"Beverly Hills Contra"—In this sequel to his comedy hit, Eddie Murphy visits Nicaragua with a group of prissy liberal Congressmen and clergymen. After boring visits to collective farms, irrepressible Eddie then decides to join the Contras and proceeds to show up American liberals with feats of derring-do. All the while, he does hilarious imitations, including some of an old peasant woman begging a Contra soldier for mercy and of an effeminate American intellectual who sympathizes with the Sandinistas. A surefire hit.

"The A-Team Goes to Nicaragua"—All America will be watching when Mr. T stalks the evil Daniel Ortega, the top Sandinista. We'll pitch this idea to the show's producers, and we're sure they'll buy it.

These, then, are the basic ideas we've devised for this all-important campaign. Self-help books ("The Contra Fitness Book"), bumper stickers ("Honk If You Love The Contras"), T-shirts, and other tie-ins should also be considered.

Get back to us on this as soon as you can. Let's do lunch.

ART LEVINE

Art Levine is a Washington writer.

The German army and the Holocaust.

A BITBURG FOOTNOTE

IN THE DEBATE over President Reagan's planned visit to the German military cemetery at Bitburg, what seems to have been forgotten is that the German army itself was an active and willing participant in the Holocaust. President Reagan, explaining why he will accompany Chancellor Kohl to the Bitburg cemetery, stated that the SS troops "were the villains, as we know, that conducted the persecutions and all." Reagan echoes the suggestion of others, including some Jewish leaders, even Elie Wiesel, that it is only the presence of the SS men buried alongside the soldiers that is offensive. Yet the fact is that the German army and the SS were full partners in the extermination of over one million Soviet Jews.

Before the invasion of the Soviet Union, the German army signed an agreement with the SS delineating their respective responsibilities in the planned genocide. Although the SS mobile killing squads, called *Einsatzgruppen*, were allocated the task of the actual shooting of the victims, the army still had the final say over the killing operations and was in charge of the *Einsatzgruppen*'s

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"marching orders, quarters, and rations." Operating in the vicinity of the front, in areas under military jurisdiction, the numerically small *Einsatzgruppen* (3,000 men for the whole of the Soviet Union) depended on the army to cordon off areas, round up the Jews, and transport the victims to the killing sites. The army proved to be an eager accomplice. Shortly after the beginning of the executions, one *Einsatzgruppe* unit noted: "Armed forces surprisingly welcome to hostility against Jews." Immediately before the infamous massacre at Babi Yar, another SS commander wrote: "The execution of at least 50,000 Jews is expected. . . . The Wehrmact [armed forces] acclaims this operation and requests energetic action."

THE ZEAL of some German army officers for the exterminations was so great that they took it upon themselves to kill Jews, despite their agreement with the SS to do no more than provide logistical support for the *Einsatzgruppen*. One *Einsatzgruppe* reported that "from estimated figures about 19,000 . . . that is in the majority Jews, were shot by the Armed Forces up to December 1941." In Serbia, which is today part of Yugoslavia, the army decided, on its own initiative, to exterminate the local Jewish populace. Without the aid of the SS, the army shot 4,000 to 5,000 Jewish men, and condemned 15,000 women and children to concentration camps. The army's thoroughness swelled the chief of the civil administration with pride. "Serbia," he reported in August 1942, is the "only country in which Jewish question and Gypsy question [is] solved."

Beyond the army's willful participation in the extermination of Soviet Jewry, the army generals collectively approved of the extinction of the Jews. In Posen on January 26, 1944, when Himmler described the extermination of the Jews to 250 assembled German generals, his words were greeted with applause. Furthermore, the generals shared in the Nazi belief that the annihilation of Soviet Jewry was necessary and a moral good. Field Marshal Walter von Reichenau, for example, composed an order of the day (subsequently distributed by other generals to their commands) depicting the extermination of the Jews as a moral imperative. It described the Jews in apocalyptic terms, and demanded that the soldiers be pitiless when exacting "just retribution upon the Jewish subhuman elements." General Erich von Manstein, who circulated his own version of this order, informed one *Einsatzgruppe* unit that he looked forward to the killing of several thousand Jews and Gypsies before Christmas. Another general, von Schenkendorf, was so enamored with the "exemplary" work of the SS that he arranged a course where the SS men could impart their methods to the soldiers.

Approval of the extermination was not confined to the army leadership. Some soldiers took part in the executions without orders to do so. One officer noted in a report the growing frequency of such actions: "The number of transgressions by military personnel against the civilian population is increasing. . . . It has also happened lately that soldiers and even officers independently undertook shootings of Jews, or that they participated in such shootings." Some troops also made a regular pastime of watching and photographing the executions. Although General Hans von Salmuth approved of the Jews' annihilation, at the same time he considered his soldiers' fervor for the killings to be a threat to army discipline. After affirming the need for "severe measures" against the Jews, he forbade the soldiers to participate in the killings until they had received explicit orders to do so.

The Reagan administration and the German government defend Reagan's intended visit to Bitburg by arguing that there are only 47 SS men buried there, as if the German army and its soldiers bore no responsibility for the Holocaust. This is not to say that every German soldier approved of the Nazi genocide. There were indeed some soldiers and officers who were horrified by what they witnessed, and a number who even tried to rescue Jews. However, the wholesale participation of the army in the extermination of Soviet Jewry and the repeated willingness of army personnel of all ranks to take initiative in the killing of Jews leaves no doubt that the German army shares with the SS in the common guilt of genocide. Two separate postwar trials of the army leadership at Nuremberg, conducted under American jurisdiction and by American judges, concluded as much. In light of the German army's criminality, President Reagan's attempt to depict the German soldiers as "victims [of Nazism], just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps," is an affront to the historical record and to human decency.

DANIEL GOLDHAGEN

Daniel Goldhagen is a graduate student in the government department at Harvard University.

We're all Haitians now.

WAKING UP TO AIDS

ON APRIL 15 a few thousand scientists from around the world gathered in Atlanta to discuss the latest research on AIDS. Many chuckled as they listened to Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret Heckler deliver the keynote address. Mrs. Heckler, reading her speech through a pair of half-spectacles, said we were fortunate that the disease had not struck earlier, say in 1961, before the discoveries in molecular biology that allow scientists to understand the acquired immune deficiency syndrome. She began to read them off: monoclonal antibodies, interleuken II, reverse transcriptase, and several others. She mispronounced or stumbled over almost every "advance" she named. It was clear to most of the audience that the cabinet officer in charge of U.S. health policy had little idea what she was talking about. Heckler

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went on to anger representatives of gay groups by remarking that the administration was eager to solve the AIDS problem "before it spreads into the general population"—as if the deaths of thousands of young men and the certain deaths of thousands more were not cause enough for concern.

Whatever Secretary Heckler understands, scientists do know a lot about AIDS now. That was clear at the huge conference, sponsored by the U.S. Public Health Service and the World Health Organization. But knowledge does not automatically lead to a solution. Even though AIDS has faded from the daily news, it has not gone away. Indeed, in many ways the problem is more frightening than ever. As Dr. James Curran, head of the AIDS task force at the Centers for Disease Control, remarked, "We now have a pretty good idea what is going to happen in the coming months and years, and it is damned depressing."

THE BIGGEST research achievement to date has been the discovery of the virus that causes AIDS by destroying certain white blood cells, crippling the body's immune system and leaving it susceptible to a variety of often fatal diseases. The various scientists who first isolated the virus are now working toward the development of a vaccine. But it will be years before it could possibly be ready for use in humans. More important, in many ways a vaccine will not make much difference. The discovery of the virus has simply given the scientists a means to determine whether a person has been infected. Based on extrapolations from the initial sampling, it now appears that about a million Americans have already caught the AIDS virus. No one fully understands the public health implications of that finding, but they are surely frightening.

Not every infected person will get AIDS. The best guess now is that about ten percent of those infected develop the disease—in other words, 100,000 of those already infected. But it is hard to know because the incubation period for AIDS (the time from exposure to infection) can range from six months to five years or more, which means the number of cases could be much higher. There is now evidence that the same virus can cause other diseases ranging from simple swollen glands to brain damage and cancer. So the scientists cannot yet know the extent of the suffering among those million infected people. But they do know that every one of them has the potential to infect others—through sex or by mixture of blood. Every infected woman can give birth to a child with AIDS by passing on the virus through blood in the womb. Everyone who has been the sex partner of an infected person must worry that he or she is now infected. And based on studies of related viruses, it appears that infection with the AIDS virus lasts for a lifetime.

Most of the estimated infected million in America are homosexual men. Gays now account for three-fourths of the 10,000 people who have actually gotten the disease. And they probably account for the same percentage of those infected. Despite the numbers, there are reasons now not to view AIDS as a problem only of gays. With the test for infection, the researchers have been able to look back in time by testing blood samples that were taken for other reasons and preserved. It now appears that AIDS originated in Africa, possibly when a similar virus that infects monkeys underwent a mutation enabling it to attack humans. Blood from children taken in Uganda in 1972 showed a high incidence of infection with the AIDS virus. In Zaire and Rwanda, European and American scientists have found that there is now a big AIDS problem, and initial studies show that about seven percent of the population in those countries is infected. In Africa, however, AIDS is not a gay disease. It spreads mostly by sex between men and women and by women passing it on to their offspring. In Africa half of the victims are female.

Going back through preserved blood specimens, the scientists can see that in the late seventies the virus appeared in the United States and found its way into two populations where it mattered a lot. One was the junkies who frequented the "shooting galleries" of the Bronx and Newark, New Jersey. Through contaminated needles, the virus spread among drug addicts, making them the group with the second highest incidence of AIDS. The other was, of course, homosexual men. Because of widespread promiscuity—and because anal sex is a very efficient means of transmitting a blood-borne disease—AIDS quickly became the gay plague. Studies are now finding that gay men are having fewer sex partners, but that will not likely affect the course of AIDS; too many gay men are already infected. Tests in San Francisco have found that 75 percent of the gay men there have the virus in their bodies.

But remember, in Africa AIDS is not a gay disease. The virus did not change its sexual preference when it entered the United States. It only happened to find its way into certain groups. To no one's surprise, except perhaps Secretary Heckler's, AIDS is already moving into the general population. Several cases have been diagnosed of men who got it from prostitutes. The sex partners of people infected are very likely to be infected themselves. A survey was conducted of men undergoing treatment at venereal disease clinics in New York who claimed to be purely heterosexual and not users of drugs. It found that 3.4 percent of these presumably promiscuous heterosexual men were infected with the AIDS virus. Numbers like that can be expected to increase in the coming months and years. Because heterosexuals tend to be less promiscuous, public health officials do not expect AIDS to spread as rapidly in the general population as it did among gays, but they expect it to spread nonetheless.

AN EFFECTIVE TREATMENT for those who already have AIDS seems to be even further away than a vaccine to prevent it. We can expect tens of thousands more deaths in the next few years, mostly of people in their teens, 20s, and 30s. It would make sense to plan now to provide the social and medical services necessary to meet this coming tragedy rather than to react with surprise when it occurs. So far Secretary

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Heckler has shown little interest in such an approach.

At the conference Dr. Curran of the Centers for Disease Control said that because the virus is spreading so rapidly, when a vaccine is developed it will probably be necessary to vaccinate every man, woman, and child in the United States. Some will recoil from the idea of a middle-class couple in the middle of America having to immunize their children against a disease that has been associated with the bathhouses, leather bars, and shooting galleries of New York and San Francisco. But a virus does not respect the finer distinctions many of us like to draw between ourselves and others.

ROBERT BAZELL

Robert Bazell is the science correspondent for NBC News.

A congressman's nightmare.

THE SKY IS FALLING

I WAS RIDING in Air Force Two with Vice President Walter Mondale back in 1979, and was predicting the impending financial crash of the eighties. It was the usual stuff: OPEC would collapse; the big banks would go under; the world would go into an economic depression. He was yawning. It had been a long day, flying over western range and cattle lands campaigning for Al Ullman, then a representative from Oregon and chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

"Protectionism," I said to Mondale as we sat at a table in the front cabin of the DC-9. "We are going isolationist and protectionist, just as we did in the thirties." Mondale yawned again.

"Fritz," I said, "have you ever heard of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act?"

"Wasn't it the act that put the damper on world trade back in the thirties?"

"That's right. And do you know who Hawley was? Hawley was a representative from Oregon and chairman of the Ways and Means Committee."

Mondale slapped himself on the forehead. "Oh, my God," he said.

Will history repeat itself? Are we riding down the trail of protectionism into another depression? In fact, this situation-tragedy is already being aired. The hot money rustlers have stripped the Continental Illinois ranch. In Ohio's savings and loan crisis, the 70 farmers' daughters came close to losing their virtue. True, Lone Ranger Paul Volcker came to the rescue. But tune in next week for another episode. It is sure to come.

This may bore you as much as it bored Mondale, but disaster is no longer light-years away. Just turn on your TV. Our primary industries are eroding before our eyes. Bankrupt farmers are dumping their grain and want to sell even cheaper. OPEC is about to collapse; oil prices will plummet. The big banks, drained of petrodollars, will be laid out on the tracks. Lone Ranger Volcker will ride up with tens of billions of dollars to rescue them. Thank you, masked man, we will say—and stock and bond prices will soar. A Dow Jones at 2,000 by this summer will be pretty heady stuff. You will come to think—as the Tonto of Congress, Jack Kemp, tells us even now—that the grass has never been greener or taller. But do not run your cattle on it. And do not buy any ranches. The rain hasn't reached the farmers. While the stock market goes up in that last frothy speculative bubble, the farmers' land is still being blown away. The same thing happened in 1929. My own farming forebears went bust in 1928.

COME AUTUMN the Latin countries will tell the gringos that they won't pay their staggering debt. We have known all along they won't pay, but their mortgages are still assets on the books of the banks so long as the charade of renegotiation is being played out. I suspect that Peru under a new nationalistic government will be the first to stop pretending. The South American people are hungry for one of their politicians to say: we will pay ourselves first, the gringos never. And when that happens, not even silver bullets will save the big banks.

The Third World countries are not the only ones who have been living on borrowed money. Corporate raiders, just as in 1929, are borrowing big. And President Reagan has been issuing treasury paper, which is eagerly bought up by foreigners who have shipped us tons of shiny goods we have not paid for. That can go on for only so long. Within a year Ronald Reagan will be one of the most unpopular presidents in our history—an auctioneer presiding over the liquidation of our wealth.

The world will go into a deep depression that will make the thirties look like a garage sale. The protectionist fever evident across the land foreshadows that disaster. There will be one last surge of inflation when the foreigners call in their paper and the dollar crashes. That will take care of our horrendous national debt. Real estate and personal debt will be liquidated through foreclosure and bankruptcy; the United States cannot go bankrupt, it will simply change its currency. Then we will have deflation, as the lost debt shrinks the money supply.

The real estate crash will be the worst. Farm land prices, now falling sharply, will go for undreamed-of prices. Iowa farm land, once selling for $4,000 an acre, now at $2,500, will drop to $300. If you can find a buyer. (The once-wealthy foreigners will stop eating so much meat and stop buying our animal feed: soybeans and corn.) Those $300,000 Georgetown houses may go for $40,000 once all the Washington lawyers and lobbyists abandon their homes after being called back to the hinterlands by depressed corporations. Let a surplus of housing develop and the prices will fall much, much further than anyone expects. It is a cycle that feeds upon itself.

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Hey, whoa. Rein up that horse. A few years of Ronald Reagan could not dry up the well that fast. Of course not. We have been riding up the trail of affluence for three decades, getting ever more expansive and exuberant. We have gone from cheap oil and hydro power to monstrous nuclear plants and OPEC, from isolationism to ludicrously expensive planes and missiles. We built gambling palaces and third homes. We search in vain for sites to bury our garbage and toxic wastes. Now we are going to get our comeuppance.

The effects of our affluence were pervasive. We became a "permissive society" that condones everything from no-cause divorces to free sex. We switched from Ovaltine to cocaine. Our kids lived in their own apartments and did as they pleased. Every group in the country demanded its "rights"; our legal system sued for ridiculous sums on every ground imaginable. We transplanted hearts and forgot the common cold. That will all change. Not only will our children come back to the nest for support, but the liberal life-styles will vanish. The blue-nose rebellion is about to begin in earnest. Its harbingers are the anti-abortionists and right-wing religionists.

Our Roosevelt will not be a liberal. This won't disturb Jack Kemp, but it should the rest of us. We got through the thirties with our institutions intact because our people were used to a tough life; 14-hour workdays were the custom, and a good many of us were still on the farm. We had won the last war. So we were willing to suffer through the last depression.

We lost our last war. That bruised all our egos and the military in particular. And now there is a generation of young people who only know the cushy, if lonely, expensive life of the cities. They are going to be trapped in those cities without jobs. When they begin losing their sports cars and their houses, they will become intensely bitter. Already unemployed steelworkers are getting angry enough to threaten people on the street. A fireside chat will not comfort them. They may well demand harsh remedies, remedies that only a despot can promise.

Our institutions will be severely tested. If a depression causes severe cutbacks in military spending—and it will—our generals will in the name of the defense of our nation ask for more power. Congress will become an even weaker institution. I wouldn't be surprised to see troops on the Capitol steps within five years. All this will be done in the name of restoring order to a frightened and disheveled society and uplift to a collapsed economy. Most of us will not only accept it but cheer for it, as the Germans did in the thirties. Germany had full employment in 1935, the only industrial nation even approaching that goal.

But now for the good news. Don't worry about a big war. The big war does not happen until *after* the depression. So we have at least five or ten years. Hi Ho, Silver!

JAMES WEAVER

James Weaver is U.S. representative of Oregon's Fourth District.

What's in a name? A lot.

THE NEW GARY HART

LET'S GET RID of the puns first. This article could have been titled HART TO HART, YOUNG HARTS RUN FREE, HARTS AND MINDS, or TWO HARTS CAMPAIGN AS ONE. Luckily it wasn't. But journalists please note: these puns have now been used. Think of your own.

There will be plenty of opportunities, because there is a new Gary Hart on the market. This Gary Hart is a young, tall, and handsome Democrat. He has a cool television personality and wants the Democratic Party to free itself from the grip of its traditional constituencies, especially labor. Some say he is a bit of a loner. He says he represents a "new generation" whose approach is "much more analytical." He defends himself against the charge that he is passionless, arguing, "I don't think being analytical means that you can't still be passionate." His middle initial is K, and he is a California state senator who is running for governor.

That's right. This is not a new Gary Hart the way there was a "new" Nixon. This is a whole separate person from the U.S. senator who ran for president last year (whose middle initial is W). But the similarities between the two politicians are eerie enough to justify reviving *Ripley's Believe It or Not*. They even look alike.

Gary Hart, the sequel, is a Santa Barbara high school teacher who got into politics as a protégé of Allard Lowenstein in the "Dump Johnson" movement of the late sixties. He ran for Congress in 1970 on an antiwar platform and nearly upset a popular incumbent Republican. In 1974 he switched to local politics, winning a state assembly seat, moving to California's upper house in 1982.

In 1971 Hart had met an aide to George McGovern who went by the same name as he did. The two hit it off and have endorsed each other ever since. But in many ways it is the Santa Barbara politician who is the real Gary Hart. Does Gary Hart embody the political emergence of us baby boomers? Then Gary K. Hart, aged 41, fits right in, while that Hartpence fellow, at 47 or 48, is really trying to crash our cohort. Was our generation seared by the struggle against the war in Vietnam? Hartpence spent most of his time in Colorado boning up on the Democratic Party rules rather than marching. Hart turned in his draft card. Are we now Yuppie "neoliberals" who stand up to special interests? Before unveiling that theme, Hartpence wasted the first year of his presidential campaign wooing the National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers' union. Meanwhile, Hart was lobbying for teacher competency tests, an act of sacrilege that caused the local branch of the NEA to campaign for his Republican opponent in 1982. (Hart became chairman of the Senate Education Committee, and California now tests new teachers.)

They've made other improvements in this year's Gary Hart. The 1984 presidential model was neither a backslap-

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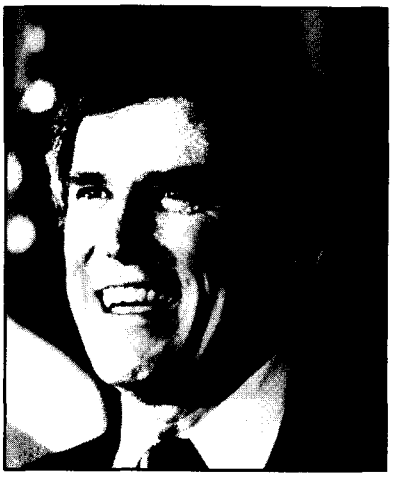
per nor a deal maker—not the man to shepherd important legislation through Congress. The new Hart is still a bit shy, but not aloof. He can make small talk with campaign workers and negotiate with lobbyists. Perhaps most important, he exhibits none of the character flaws that marred the performance of last year's Hart. The new Hart is still no dynamic speaker, but he is not enigmatic, arrogant, or giggly—achieving instead an aw-shucks Jimmy Stewart earnestness.

None of this would ordinarily make Gary K. Hart a logical candidate for governor of our largest state. Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley, who lost by a few thousand votes to Republican George Deukmejian in 1982, is expected to seek the Democratic nomination again. And mere state senators cannot jump directly into the governorship. In a big state like California, they simply lack the necessary name recognition.

Did I say name recognition? A recent Field poll showed "Gary Hart, State Senator" with a 52 percent identification, higher than several popular "statewide" officials. Now, 52 percent of the voters do not really know *this* Hart. But their confusion is the basis of the wonderfully cynical strategy being pursued by Hart's backers, the West Los Angeles liberal "machine" of Representatives Henry Waxman and Howard Berman. In this scenario, the 1986 California gubernatorial primary will be a replay of the 1984 state presidential primary. In one corner, we have an aging interest group politician, tied to organized labor, bereft of vision, the Black Mondale—Mayor Bradley. In the other corner, standing in for Gary Hart, will be Gary Hart. Reporters, drawn by the Ripley's angle and the need to disabuse the public, will churn out stories (like this one) explaining that Gary Hart isn't Gary Hart, but that he's really a pretty neat guy in his own right. Fake name recognition becomes real name recognition, new generation meets old generation, and Hart beats Bradley as Hart beat Mondale in the California primary.

BELIEVE IT OR NOT . . .

GARY HART



GARY HART

That people as savvy as Waxman and Berman would even contemplate this strategy indicates the extent to which Gary "U.S." Hart's presidential campaign has already altered the politics of the state, if not the nation. The elder Hart showed that a Mondale-style coalition, heavy on the union members and COLA-lovin' elderly, is demographically doomed in California. He exploited the generational hubris of the baby boomers, and the genuine dissatisfaction with conventional liberal solutions among all groups. But what really got politicians' attention was all the new money that came out of the woodwork to support the Colorado Hart—fresh real estate money like that of Orange County's David Stein and the Bay Area's Don Carlson; high-tech money like that in the network of Silicon Valley PR man Regis McKenna. (America's newest neoliberal, Ted Kennedy, just happened to invite Stein to sit with him at this year's Super Bowl.)

There are some flaws in Gary K. Hart's plan to assume the political identity (and funding) of his namesake. Bradley was recently reelected to his fourth term as mayor with an impressive 67.7 percent of the vote, while Waxman and Berman failed in an attempt to grab a share of municipal power when their candidate for city attorney was beaten. Gary K. must also contend with a rival Hart pretender, State Senator John Garamendi. Like Gary K., Garamendi is a handsome ex-athlete. He too claims to represent a new you-know-what, having endorsed the presidential candidacy of you-know-who. Like Gary K., he has shown the courage to take unconventional positions—pushing a "workfare" scheme of training and public service employment in the face of opposition from government unions. Unlike Gary K., Garamendi is considered a self-promoter. He talks of developing a "Strategic Plan for California's economy" to help Californians become the "Yankee traders of the Pacific Basin."

Garamendi's futuristic visions have a papier-mâché quality. He is a politician who says "Let's cut the B.S." and then hands you another load; his favorite verb is "interface." But his flamboyance points up the major weakness of the California Gary Hart, which is his (very Hart-like) aversion to rhetorical hyperbole of any sort. Hart still doesn't quite understand why Bill Honig, California's superintendent of public instruction, got all the credit for recent educational reforms when he, Hart, had hammered out the actual legislation. But it was Honig, traveling the state, whipping the public into a lather about "higher standards" and cowing the local NEA, who made Hart's craftsmanship possible.

If you could combine the new Hart's virtues with a bit of Garamendi's bluster, you'd have a formidable "new generation" candidate indeed. The world still awaits the appearance of the perfect Gary Hart. But we're getting closer.

MICKEY KAUS

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Children in the Street

Documentary films are a worry. First of all, there's the term "documentary" itself, which was thought clumsy by the very man who invented it, John Grierson. A better term was proposed by Richard Barsam, "nonfiction film." In his book of that title, Barsam says, "The nonfiction film dramatizes fact instead of fiction." That seemingly simple statement implies a lot, particularly in its verb; it implicates everything from travelogues to so-called (miscalled) cinema verité. It also includes—worrisomely—*Streetwise*.

Streetwise
(Angelika Films)

Streetwise is excellent. Its excellence lies in the way it dramatizes facts, thus its excellence raises yet again some insistent problems. The film deals with the young street people of Seattle—prostitutes, male and female, pimps, and drug dealers. The facts of their lives are, in essence, familiar: this time it's Seattle instead of any one of dozens of other cities in this country and elsewhere. What distinguishes *Streetwise* is not the novelty of its material but the high quality of the filmmaking, so high that the film approaches the most dangerous of thresholds—the risk of being beautiful at the expense (one may say) of its subject. Its people are so good in their "roles," the knitting of the scenes is so deft, that we risk thinking of the way that *Streetwise* is done instead of the purpose for which it was done. And since the subject is miserable young lives with miserable futures, that thought is damnably disquieting.

One of the lives has no future. A teenager, a boy, visits his convict father, who gives him assurances of love and better times; later the boy commits suicide. Can we restrain ourselves from thinking that the filmmakers scored a coup? Did they nudge one another, gleaming-eyed, when the grieving father leaned over the half-open coffin and rested an open can of Coca-Cola on the bottom half?

Most certainly I do not impugn the honesty and compassion of anyone connected with this film. *Streetwise* was begun out of concern and could not have been made without earning the confidence of the people it shows us. But—an old irony—the very fact that it was done well plagues us with worries about satisfaction, the filmmakers' in doing it well, ours in appreciating that fact.

Many writers have dealt with this subject ever since photography was invented, Walter Benjamin and Susan Sontag among them. A particularly poignant example is an essay called "The Child in the Street" by Rustom Bharucha (*The Georgia Review*, fall 1979). Bharucha had returned from America, where he was doing graduate studies, to his native Calcutta. One day while he was on a corner waiting for a bus, he heard a soft cough and thud next to him, heard them again. A child lay in the street next to him, not unusual in Calcutta, but this child was dying. Bharucha didn't know what to do. As irrelevant expiation, he left some money on the pavement next to the child and got on his bus. Then he began to think about writing his essay; and then he began to be horrified at the idea of "aestheticization of the child," of wringing our hearts. This led him inevitably to the subject of film.

> After seeing Malle's film [*Calcutta*], I think it is possible to represent the reality of the child . . . in film. But . . . I am caught between two unrelenting alternatives. On the one hand, I want to believe that the child in the street can be represented in art. To deny representation is . . . to deny the power and efficacy of art. . . . On the other hand, there are certain realities in life that are . . . too "real" to be treated realistically.

"On the one hand . . . on the other hand" is where the most thoughtful people, thus the most tormented ones, have to leave it.

Streetwise began when *Life* sent a writer and a photographer, Cheryl McCall and Mary Ellen Mark, to Seattle. The resulting article appeared in *Life*, but McCall and Mark felt that the subject needed fuller treatment. They went back to Seattle with a British filmmaker, Martin Bell, who directed and photographed the picture and did both jobs superlatively. Not one shot has the "grabbed" look of many nonfiction works, especially those in color; not one moment of conversation sounds dragged or enforced. The first fact means that Bell had foresight; he anticipated where action would happen and was ready for it. (Though doubtless he had to shoot much more than he finally used.) As for the uninhibited talk, it certifies Bell's relation with these people. Only their trust could have made Bell and his colleagues virtually invisible to the people whom they were shooting and recording.

The name of the editor, Nancy Baker, must be garlanded. She has put this film together like a mobile mosaic, each piece just precisely long enough, each piece building kinetically toward a whole. This sort of filmmaking obviously eliminates any chance for master

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Camila. Old-fashioned doomed romance, well acted, that happens to be factual. Argentina, 1847, a highborn beauty and a young priest. (Reviewed 4/15/85)

My First Wife. Superb drama of breaking marriage in Melbourne today. John Hargreaves magnificent as the anguished husband, Wendy Hughes sexually true as the cooling wife. Fine direction by Paul Cox. (4/29/85)

The Purple Rose of Cairo. Another sparkling Woody Allen idea looking for a film. A mousy 1930s housewife fantasizes a plummy actor right down off the screen. Yes, but then what? (4/1/85)

The Sure Thing. Bright cross-country college romance. More Champale than champagne, but it bubbles. (4/8/85)

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shots and reverse shots and all the other standard elements. With what she had in hand, Baker has worked miracles. Moreover, benefiting from Bell's foresight in shooting, she has been able to balance elements of time: often an event is discussed by two people, and we see a "flashback" of the event that's being discussed. Every bit of footage that was needed is there, and every bit of it is used well. Yet it's precisely the virtues of the film that—ungratefully, perhaps, but relentlessly—make the viewer a bit uneasy: not about veracity but about (let's call it) the Bharucha problem.

On the material of *Streetwise* there is by now really nothing more to say. We see yet again that the troubles of adolescents are extensions of their parents' troubles. The convict father really cared for his son but, apparently, too late. The 14-year-old prostitute who takes up most of the screen time is on generally good terms with her hard-drinking waitress mother, but the mother says that the girl's prostitution is "just a phase she's passing through." The data are grindingly familiar. It's the filming of them that is extraordinary. *Streetwise* wouldn't be worth seeing if it weren't so well done.

On the other hand. . . .

Parturition Update. I was misinformed about one point in the fine Australian film *My First Wife*. I was told that the footage of childbirth was actually of the actress Wendy Hughes giving birth a few years before this film was made, and was used here for the delivery scene of the character she plays. I'm now told that the footage is not of Hughes.

While the CEO soars, his company stagnates.

THE EXECUTIVE'S NEW CLOTHES

BY ROBERT B. REICH

BY ALMOST any measure, America's top corporations have performed poorly over the past 15 years. They have lost markets to the Japanese and lesser developed nations. Their rate of productivity has waned. They have failed to innovate. Many of their products have been shoddy and unreliable. Many of their employees have been disgruntled. Since 1970, America's 500 largest industrial corporations together have failed to generate a single new job. And their earnings have been singularly disappointing; adjusted for inflation, the combined net profits of the same 500 actually declined 20 percent between 1974 and 1983.

True, not all of the problems were of their own making. During the seventies they had to contend with two oil shocks and a spate of new regulations—all of which, in turn, required extensive new investments. And the onslaught of foreign competition—much of it based on low-wage labor—posed an unprecedented challenge. Still, large American corporations proved themselves particularly inept in responding to these demands. After all, Japanese companies faced the same oil shocks, similar regulatory requirements, and an even more intensely competitive environment, and did so without the American corporations' home-player advantage of a huge and sophisticated domestic market.

Not even the current recovery has changed the picture dramatically. America's biggest corporations continue their long downward slide, like prehistoric beasts quietly expiring. Few have come even close to matching their sixties performance. The Dow Jones industrial average began its spurt in August of 1982. But when adjusted for inflation, the high of 1,300 reached at the start of 1985 was still less than half of the 1966 peak (and total profits for the Fortune 500 in 1984 were actually below the level reached in the recession year of 1981).

Iacocca: An Autobiography by Lee Iacocca (Bantam, 352 pp., $19.95)

Managing by Harold Geneen (Doubleday, 297 pp., $17.95)

In Search of Excellence by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman Jr. (Harper & Row, 360 pp., $19.95; paper, Warner Books, $8.95)

The One Minute Manager by Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson (William Morrow, 112 pp., $15; paper, Berkeley, $6.95)

CEO: Corporate Leadership in Action by Harry Levinson and Stuart Rosenthal (Basic Books, 308 pp., $19.95)

The poor performance is all the more remarkable in light of the privileged position enjoyed by large corporations in Ronald Reagan's America. Not since the twenties has big business been so unconstrained. Consider the extraordinary cut in corporate taxes that began with the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. In 1965 corporate tax payments accounted for 26 percent of federal revenues; by 1983 the portion was down to six percent. "Safe-harbor leasing" and other similar devices built into the tax code allowed the biggest corporations to enjoy their lowest effective tax rates in 50 years. General Electric, for example, paid no taxes at all between 1981 and 1983, on profits of $6.5 billion.

John Kenneth Galbraith once wrote reassuringly of the "countervailing power" within the American system, which offsets the influence of large corporations. But in the America of the eighties, these counterweights have been all but removed. Health, safety, and environmental regulations have been deferred or cut back; consumers and environmentalists no longer claim the media attention they once did. Organized labor has been cowed; union membership is down to 17 percent of the private-sector work force, and wage concessions are the order of the day. Few voices any longer broach the sub-

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ject of corporate responsibility to the poor or to the communities and nations in which they do business. In fact, the dominant issues on the public agenda these days are merely those over which American business itself is divided—how to simplify taxes, reduce the budget deficit, and get foreign nations to open up their markets to our goods and services. At the same time, and with increasing boldness, state and local officials—anxious to lure or keep major businesses—are promising corporate leaders all sorts of special subsidies and tax breaks. Not even foreign competitors are imposing an enduring constraint, as protectionism waxes. Even excluding tariffs, the proportion of American goods sheltered from foreign competition has risen from 20 percent in 1980 to 35 percent in 1984.

NOTHING so exemplifies the unfettered position of today's large corporations as the autonomous power enjoyed by their chief executive officers—"CEOs" in business-speak—notwithstanding the continuing poor performance of the companies they run. One measure is found in their salaries and bonuses, which have increased much faster than inflation, and twice as fast as the earnings of hourly workers. During each of the past two years, CEOs of the 100 largest publicly owned industrial corporations have received raises averaging almost 14 percent, while hourly wages have increased only about six percent per year.

Another sign is the near impunity with which today's CEOs are able to preserve their jobs in the face of takeover threats. In recent years corporate raiders like T. Boone Pickens and Victor Posner have discovered that they can make a fortune by threatening to buy up enough stock in select companies to oust their directors and executives. The raider need not actually do the dirty deed. A credible threat to do so is quite adequate to elicit ransom from the besieged CEO. The ransom comes in the form of a payment for the shares of stock already in the raider's possession, at a high premium over what the raider paid for them—and often over current market price. This exchange is archly dubbed "greenmail" by Wall Street neologists, in order to distinguish it from somewhat less savory exchanges. But whatever the appellation, it should be clear that both the raider and the CEO come out ahead. The raider becomes substantially wealthier and, having enhanced his reputation for predation, is ideally positioned to launch his next attack; and the CEO is still ensconced in his lucrative and powerful job. Less well-off are the shareholders, who otherwise might have sold their stock to the raider at a nice profit, and the remaining shareholders whose company is now poorer than before. The CEO typically justifies his actions by arguing that the remaining shareholders—as well as the company's employees—would be far worse off had the raider actually gained control and installed a new CEO. But this argument, to say the least, is self-serving.

If all else fails, the modern CEO ensures that his nest will be adequately feathered by means of another device affectionately known as a "golden parachute." This is a generous severance payment, often totaling a large multiple of the CEO's annual salary and bonus, which is awarded—the parachute automatically opens—should a takeover be successful. CEOs routinely justify this largess by suggesting that it is necessary in order to preserve their impartial judgment during an unfriendly takeover fight. Without the parachute, so the argument goes, the CEO would feel so insecure that he might be tempted to fight the takeover even when it was in the best interests of the shareholders; the parachute is really a kind of insurance policy for shareholders—giving them confidence in the CEO's performance and advice during these stressful interludes. The argument, baldly stated, is a strong indictment of corporate leadership. It suggests that the only way we can trust CEOs not to feather their nests at the shareholders' expense is to give them another feathery nest at the shareholders' expense.

A FINAL example is the so-called "leveraged buyout." The technique—which has taken Wall Street by storm in recent years—is quite simple. Executives obtain huge bank loans, which they use to buy up their company's outstanding stock. The loans are backed by the company's assets. The executives then own the company. This ploy has some tax advantages—the new owners can get increased depreciation on assets written up in value to reflect the higher purchase price of the stock. But the public justification for leveraged buyouts (and the reason that banks are willing to dedicate such large sums to these endeavors) is that they are thought to make CEOs more entrepreneurial, and thereby improve company performance.

Put simply, it is argued that executives who own their company will work harder and better. Yet from the standpoint of the company's shareholders, this is a curious argument indeed. Ironically it suggests that shareholders who are approached by company executives wishing to buy their stock should refuse the offer, and instead vote to replace the executives with new ones who are more highly motivated. And it reveals that executives in such a situation have an inherent conflict of interest. How can they act on behalf of the shareholders in advising them whether to sell their shares, and simultaneously be the purchasers of those same shares? If a small group of top managers can borrow to the hilt to buy their company and still expect a handsome return, shouldn't the original shareholders hang on to their shares in order to gain some of the action?

TO SUM UP, we are faced with a paradox. Our major corporations are stewards for a sizable chunk of our national wealth. The long-term performance of these corporations is abysmal, and continues to worsen. But at the same time we—the citizens and the shareholders—are willing to grant these companies, and their CEOs, ever greater license to act in any way they wish.

What will come of this? One possibility is that these divergent trends eventually will clash. At some point we can expect a resurgence of the sort of economic populism that periodically captures the American imagination. The large corporation and its leaders will be vilified in the media. This will be accompanied by a new round of regulatory restraints on corporate action. In addition, managerial shields like the "business judgment rule" of corporate law, which now prevents shareholders from questioning the decisions of executives, will be rescinded or relaxed—thereby opening the way for many more lawsuits by disgruntled investors. Pension fund managers will take a more active role in preventing executive featherbedding. We may even get serious about proposals for economic democracy.

But a more likely possibility, at least in the short run, is that America will consider the twin problems of poor cor-

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porate performance and the privileged position of the CEO as challenges to managerial attitudes and techniques. (As a culture, we tend to prefer pep talks to social criticism—stories about what works to exposés about what doesn't—at least until the underlying problems loom so large that they can no longer be ignored.) Indeed, there is evidence that we have already embarked upon this Panglossian path. It comes in the form of a new literary genre that has emerged during the last few years: the CEO success story.

THE NEW genre has been enormously popular. *In Search of Excellence* by Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman Jr., first published in 1983, already has sold five million copies. In case you are one of the few without your own copy, the book tells the stories of the best American companies and their leaders—Walt Disney Productions, Ray Kroc and McDonald's, Caterpillar Tractor, Texas Instruments, and so on—and suggests lessons to be learned from them. Not far behind in total sales is *The One Minute Manager* by Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson. This book is written as a fairy tale about a young man whose search for the perfect manager leads him to a guru—the One Minute Manager—who shares his great wisdom with the young man in a mere 106 pages of large-type text. Then come the recent autobiographies: *Iacocca*, the story of the irrepressible CEO of Chrysler, which has held first place on *The New York Times* best-seller list for months; and *Managing* by Harold Geneen, the tale of the erstwhile CEO of ITT. *Geneen*, a biography by Robert Schoenberg, is also in the shops. *CEO: Corporate Leadership in Action* by Harry Levinson and Stuart Rosenthal is a collection of biographies and managerial lessons derived from five captains of American industry, such as G.E.'s Reginald Jones and Citicorp's Walter Wriston. All of these CEO success stories have spawned imitations and variations. Bookstores are now bulging with new volumes of stories and anecdotes about creating, achieving, or becoming impassioned about "excellence"—preferably within one minute—and about tales of tough-minded CEOs who have overcome adversity to make millions.

I do not mean to tar with an overly broad brush. The books in this new genre vary substantially in quality and sophistication. *Iacocca*, for

RUSSIA

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The Eagle and the Small Birds

Crisis in the Soviet Empire: From Yalta to Solidarity

Michael Charlton

The University of Chicago Press

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example, is a delight to read; the story he relates is charming, funny, in places quite poignant. On the other hand, Harold Geneen's attempt at self-revelation is ponderous and pedantic. Iacocca doesn't take himself too seriously; Geneen seems desperate to secure for himself a place in history. *In Search of Excellence* offers rare insights into motivating employees and satisfying customers; the authors skillfully weave their stories into memorable lessons. *The One Minute Manager*, by contrast, is a fatuous exercise in manipulative managerial techniques. *CEO* presents its success stories in a no-nonsense, matter-of-fact manner that is at once refreshing and disarming. But notwithstanding these important differences, the books share some features that help explain the popularity of the genre as a whole, and shed some light upon its significance in this era of repressed criticism.

THE HEROES of these stories are mavericks. They are crusty, strong-willed characters who have no patience for fools or slackers. They buck the system. They take no crap. They win. Iacocca's story really begins when Henry Ford fires him. The reason? "Sometimes you just don't like somebody," Ford explains. Iacocca then takes over Chrysler when the firm is at rock bottom. The rest of the tale is about Iacocca's and Chrysler's joint comeback, and ultimate victory. The victory permits a bittersweet revenge on Henry Ford—and on all other autocrats and nay-sayers. Indeed, it is the American saga of the underdog who eventually makes it big—whose hard work, perseverance, and cunning finally prevail over the powerful elites that try to keep him down. The same story inspired Horatio Alger's novellas. It powers Rocky. It runs through *In Search of Excellence*—from Ray Kroc's hamburgers to the product champions at 3M.

Even Harold Geneen comes off as a maverick. As financial vice president of Raytheon in the fifties, he refuses to report to the president through the president's staff. He tells the president: "Either I am running this company or they are. I want to get my orders directly from you and not from them. So, you think it over. And let me know Monday morning." When it looks like he won't be president, Geneen quits Raytheon to become CEO of ITT. At the time ITT is little more than a lackluster collection of overseas telephone companies that the Bell System has discarded. Over the next 18 years Geneen builds it into a massive conglomerate with annual sales over $17 billion and profits of $550 million—the 13th largest company in America. He is tough as nails, True Grit.

SECOND, these CEOs are colorful and outspoken. They are the antithesis of the gray-flanneled professional manager of yore whose very blandness was his most distinguishing quality. Although many of them share a background in finance, they are contemptuous of the "bean counters" and the super-analytic MBAs, who, in Iacocca's words, "seem to think that every business decision can be structured and reduced to a case study." They eschew memorandums and elaborate procedures. They detest office politics. Geneen describes political maneuvering as "a form of unfair self-aggrandizement which, if not curbed, will destroy the morale and forward thrust of any company." In short, these heroes hate bureaucracy in all its many forms.

Third, they believe in "hands-on" management. They want to confront people directly, touch them, challenge them, and motivate them through the sheer force of personality. Geneen spends countless hours grilling his managers—demanding that they think through what they're proposing, that they get the facts exactly right, that they tell the truth. Iacocca is a whirlwind of handshakes and inspirational talks—to employees, middle-managers, shareholders, bankers, members of Congress, customers, anyone who will listen. G.E.'s Reg Jones, portrayed in *CEO*, personally meets all the company's new young managers, visits ailing employees in the hospital, asks that company technicians explain to him precisely what they are working on, in ways that he can understand. All the heroes of *In Search of Excellence* manage by walking around their offices and factories, talking to employees and customers, getting directly involved. Even the One Minute Manager puts his hands on employees' shoulders and gives them one minute of praise.

Finally, these CEOs are missionaries. Their stories take on an evangelical tone because these men have been inspired. They have found meaning and value in the services they provide. They manage their enterprises by ensuring that employees share those same meanings and values. The atmosphere in these companies is part religious revival, part pep rally. Personnel at Disney theme parks are trained to be "hosts," to think of visitors as personal guests. IBM is fanatical about customer service. Iacocca is a zealot, inspiring his followers with the Belief in Chrysler. Reg Jones effuses about "the distinctive spirit of G.E. . . . that intangible but ever-so-real amalgam of enterprise and loyalty and honor." These CEOs stage contests, award ceremonies, and celebrations; they foster myths, rituals, and legends. They love excitement and hoopla; they downplay cool rationality. In fact, their contempt for the abstractions of professional managers can be understood, in part, as a rejection of intellectualism—of the notion that knowledge and meaning derive from access to special expertise.

The evangelical message is that with enough guts, tenacity, and charisma you too—gentle reader—can be a great manager, a captain of industry. Geneen says, "Managers must manage!" Iacocca says, "You have to be a motivator!" The heroes of *In Search of Excellence* say, "Make the average Joe a winner and a hero!" The One Minute Manager says, "Invest in People!"

CONSIDERED together, these characteristics make popular heroes. In their contempt for bureaucracy, formal process, and intellectual abstraction—and their passion for outspoken independence, direct dealing, and charismatic leadership—these CEOs seem perfectly in tune with the anti-establishment tendencies now found on both the right and left of the political spectrum. They are cowboy capitalists.

These stories therefore give comfort to Americans who harbor vague misgivings about the place of the large, sluggish corporation in American life—and about the faceless oligarchs who run them. The cumulative message of these books is that we are entering upon a new populist era in which the mavericks are in charge. They are shaking up torpid corporate bureaucracies, bringing forth a new sense of team spirit and entrepreneurship. The Henry Fords of the old world are being replaced by the Lee Iacoccas of the new. The imperious bean counters are on the run. There is no reason to question the fundamental legitimacy of big business in America, or to flirt with economic populism, be-

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cause the populists already have taken over—from the inside. And they are wildly successful.

SURELY THE HEROES of these books deserve our applause. They have brought a new dynamism to American enterprise, and generated an aura of team spirit and collective commitment that is new to big business. They have properly shaken up encrusted bureaucracies—substituting charisma and zeal for standard operating procedures. But we should not be too quick to accept the comforting message these stories imply. The populism that these heroes evince may be relatively superficial. Beyond the new atmospherics, it remains unclear precisely what our heroes have accomplished. These books are strangely silent, for example, on precisely how corporate success should be defined or measured. Their authors talk incessantly about "excellence," "top performance," and "winning"—and occasionally profitability. But for the most part the genre assumes away the central questions. How should we define corporate success? Have these mavericks really made a difference? Are the fundamental problems of big business susceptible to managerial solutions?

Consider the record. Harold Geneen writes that when he was CEO he defined success as a ten-percent growth in earnings per year. He insisted that every one of ITT's far-flung divisions and subsidiaries attain at least this level of performance. "I used to say ITT was a 'lockbox' stock. That meant that shareholders, large and small, could put our stock on the bottom of the safe-deposit box and not have to look at it again. It would take care of itself." But ITT's actual performance during these years raises some doubts about Geneen's claims. Between 1959 and 1977—Geneen's years at the helm—the firm's per-share earnings increased 117 percent. This just about matched the rise in the consumer price index. In fact, investors who took Geneen up on his "lockbox" notion—purchasing ITT stock when Geneen took over the company and selling it when he resigned—did less well than they would have done had they invested in a portfolio of all stocks on the New York Stock Exchange.

Geneen also asserts that in order to make money you have to make a "contribution to society"—you must "create value." Geneen took this admonition seriously; during his tenure as CEO he played an active role in politics. But one could question what sort of "contribution" this involvement represented. When the Brazilian government threatened to seize ITT's assets without adequate compensation, Geneen was instrumental in getting passage of the 1962 Hickenlooper Amendment, which barred U.S. economic aid to any government that seized American assets without adequate compensation; soon thereafter, Brazil improved its offer. Geneen and his corporation also sought to prevent the election of Salvador Allende to the presidency of Chile. During these same years, ITT paid millions of dollars in bribes to public officials in a number of countries. And according to an internal memo from ITT lobbyist Dita Beard, the company agreed to help finance the 1972 Republican National Convention in the expectation that Nixon's Justice Department would drop an antitrust suit against it.

Lee Iacocca's goal was less ambitious—to save Chrysler. He seems to have succeeded splendidly. But it remains unclear to what extent Chrysler's resurgence has been attributable to its management. In 1979 and 1980, when Chrysler plummeted into the red, Ford and GM were not far behind. In 1980 Ford lost about $1.5 billion—almost as much as Chrysler—and GM lost about one billion dollars. Then, beginning in 1981, all three automakers rode the same wave upward, ultimately to new record profits.

WHAT accounts for this almost identical pattern? In 1979 Paul Volcker and the Federal Reserve Board he chairs decided to "break the back of inflation" by squeezing the money supply. Interest rates skyrocketed, and Americans stopped buying cars. In 1981 the Reagan administration got the Japanese to limit the number of cars they shipped to the United States, and in 1982 the Fed loosened the money supply. At that point Americans started buying American cars again. It seems likely that Chrysler—flush with a federal loan guarantee—would have bobbed back to the surface again even without the charismatic leadership of Chairman Lee.

In fact, one might ask whether the goal of "saving Chrysler" was all that important—to anyone other than Chrysler's beleaguered shareholders, that is. During 1979, when Congress debated whether to guarantee $1.2 bil-

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lion of new loans to the ailing firm, there was a great deal of talk about the importance of Chrysler to the American economy. But Chrysler now employs one-third fewer people than it did six years ago. And more and more of the components that go into the cars that Chrysler assembles—indeed, more and more of the cars that Chrysler sells—are manufactured outside the United States. Once the Japanese quota was ended this spring, Chrysler announced that it would greatly expand its imports of Mitsubishis. Some commentators have suggested that in a few years the firm will be more appropriately called Chrysler Imports. In short, while Lee Iacocca seems to be a man of extraordinary talents, it's hard to gauge exactly how much credit is due him, and for what.

The same ambiguities about the meaning of "success" plague many of the other success stories. During the seventies, when Reg Jones was CEO of G.E., the firm's growth in sales and net income just about held even with the growth of the American economy. This was hardly a stellar performance. Other companies that were doing well a few years ago when these stories were being gathered are now foundering; their leaders evidently did not position them for sustained profitability. In the last year, Walt Disney Productions has been plagued by takeover battles, management shake-ups, and strikes. Texas Instruments is fighting for its life. Apple Computer is losing key personnel. Caterpillar Tractor is sustaining losses and moving its production abroad. ITT is on the verge of being broken up.

IF OUR maverick heroes have had little practical effect upon the performance of their firms—if their actions have merely perpetuated corporate privilege, notwithstanding their fiery rhetoric—then these CEOs cannot be the agents of economic populism. If the lessons they preach come down to mere atmospherics—making employees feel like winners, but not fundamentally altering the structure of ownership and control; creating a team spirit, but reserving the option of moving production abroad—then their populism is a sham. If their "successes" are defined so narrowly as to be meaningless in an era when economic change often entails large social costs and benefits, then it is only a matter of time before the sham is discovered. When this happens, our CEOs will be roundly condemned.

There is an overwhelming tendency in American life either to lionize or pillory the people who stand at the helms of our large institutions—to offer praise or level blame for outcomes over which they may have little control. This tendency is particularly apparent in regard to the performance of large corporations, whose legitimacy in our political and economic system continues to be an open question. The current infatuation with successful CEOs offers an illustration. The unfortunate result is that we are distracted from deeper questions about the organization of our economic system. In personalizing these exciting tales, we overlook much bigger stories.

EMISSARY IN THE EAST

The Call: An American Missionary in China by John Hersey

(Knopf, 701 pp., $19.95)

The list of novels set in China that Westerners have written over the last 60 years or so is an imposing one, and fascinating in its variety. To name only a few, we have been offered an exquisite slice of Manchu decadence in Victor Segalen's *René Leys*, the harsh peasant literalism of Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth*, the tragic Comintern maneuverings of André Malraux's *Man's Fate*, the piercing visions of a starving child in J. G. Ballard's *Empire of the Sun*, the shenanigans of foreign traders in James Clavell's *Tai-pan*, the cloak-and-dagger intrigues of post-Maoist dissidents in Nancy Milton's *The China Option*. There was also, in 1956, John Hersey's short yet intense portrayal of a young American engineer out to tame the waters of the Yangtze gorges, *A Single Pebble*. Now, 30 years later, John Hersey has returned to China with his long, complex, and moving novel *The Call*.

The Call is the story of David Treadup (1878-1950), poor farm boy, roustabout, college kid, oarsman, born-again Christian, skillful scientist, YMCA secretary, rural relief worker, China missionary, and internee. The background against which his story unfolds moves from late 19th-century rural New England to the China of the fading years of the Ch'ing dynasty, through the failed republic and the bleak years of warlordism, to the Nanking decade, the Japanese occupation, and the communist victory.

David Treadup is always at the center of the novel, a great big man, anxious to do good. Hersey avoids the sentimentality that dooms many novels about missionaries by letting us know from the beginning that Treadup will realize his ineffectualness in the end. The document that details the stages of this melancholy self-realization is called *The Search*, written by Treadup in carefully hoarded notebooks in 1943, when he has been interned by the Japanese in a north China camp. Hersey's use of this document is both tactful and provocative—we never get to read the whole thing, but passages are mediated for us to illuminate every stage of Treadup's life. Passages from *The Search* alternate with sections of Treadup's diaries, kept with admirable consistency for most of his adult life, and most ingeniously (and convincingly) preserved; there are also selections from Treadup's letters home, especially to his brother Paul, and official letters to YMCA superiors and missionary friends. Hersey binds the whole together with a discreet imitation of a historian's narrative voice, full of admissions about what he will never be able to know because of lacunae in the sources. At their best, these observations have a dazzling effectiveness and economy, as in this passage on Treadup's crisis of faith: "Nothing, here, about the consequences of the experience, devastating though they were to be for him. He does not speculate—he never will—whether he imagined those presences with him in the room, or was suffering some sort of psychic accident. Several days pass before he can write: 'I am calm. I am out of touch with God.' "

In structure the novel is terse, docu-

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mentary, with short sections moving in fast sequence, clipped sentences, and a host of characters who circle around David Treadup in the varied stages of his life. Great events flicker just off the pages, like distant gunfire, though occasionally Treadup is confronted directly by the horrors of reality, as when a missionary friend has his face shot away for refusing to give his watch to a KMT soldier in the antiforeign riots of 1927 in Nanking.

THERE IS, in this long book, an extraordinary amount of powerful writing about China, especially its poverty and its wars, its catastrophic floods and bungled relief missions. David Treadup, landing in China in 1905, is given an inkling of the task awaiting him as a missionary by the smells that bear down upon him: "the smell of night soil spread on fields . . . ; of decaying vegetation and feces in canals; of burning garbage; of the rotting guts of beasts in shambles; of garlic and sweat and menses and bad teeth and mildewed quilted garments—the hideous compacted smells of the poor." The passage artfully prepares us for one of Hersey's central themes, the terrible tensions that emerge between the foreign-educated experts and the poor they are trying to help; and it gives a hint as to the route Treadup will follow, sliding from Christian preaching, via technical aid and educational work, to radical political commitment and eventual despair.

Treadup's childhood and youth are given sharp focus—*his* rural poverty had been a New England one where farmers "worked a trashy soil and with their stoic oxen dragged rocks on stone boats year after year to the ragged walls that marked the outermost limits of their strength and patience." But it is China that dominates the book, and here Hersey has done a most ingenious thing. He arranges for David Treadup to experience his most important moments of insight about his mission and its purpose (or lack of it) in two environments that are both Chinese and yet strangely, even savagely, separated from it. One is the world of Chinese coolie laborers working in the French trenches in the closing year of World War I, after China had declared war on the side of the Allies against Germany. The second is the world of the servantless Westerners in 1943, after they have been interned by the Japanese in a large mission compound, now converted into a five-acre jail.

These two aspects of Chinese experience in the two great wars are known to those who teach and work in Chinese history, but probably not to most readers at large. Indeed the first detailed book on the Chinese coolie labor force in France, Michael Summerskill's *China on the Western Front*, has only just been published, too late to be of use to Hersey; and I know of only one published account of the Wei-hsien civilian internment camp in Shantung province, the vivid *Shantung Compound* by Langdon Gilkey, which Hersey does not mention among the sources he has consulted. Material may be sparse, but the special aura of these two communities—displaced Chinese in Europe, doubly displaced Westerners in China—enables Hersey to be especially convincing as he shows Treadup exploring two central themes: first, the immense power of popular education on the illiterate workers of China, and second, the rediscovery of meaning in life suddenly without God.

THE MOST important secondary figures in all this are Treadup's wife, Emily, and his Chinese friend Johnny Wu. Emily, married by the young David Treadup after brief acquaintance, so that he can take up his evangelical work in China—restless young bachelors were not welcome in the missions—grows on the reader throughout the book, not by virtue of her own powers so much as by the reader's awareness of the depth of Treadup's tongue-tied love for her. Bearing him three sons and a daughter who dies at age one while Treadup is away from home, Emily is partly an uncomplaining foil, but also a model for the sense of place that constantly eludes the ever restless Treadup. Their passion for each other is made gently clear by Hersey, but only in the discreet language of period-piece diaries or letters—there is no overt erotic description anywhere in the book, and almost no false note in the couple's disarming written record of their life together. An exception, to me, was one letter in which Treadup tells his fiancée—still waiting to sail from the United States—of the brutal excesses against Christian women in China perpetrated by the Chinese at the time of the Tientsin massacre. I was never convinced David would have written that to Emily and it hung like a small ques-

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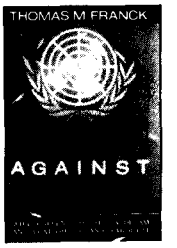

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tion mark over the novel. But when Emily quietly dies, back in the United States, dismissed from her job in a little town lending library after her life of sacrifice in China, I think many readers will be near to tears.

Johnny Wu, on the other hand, is a galvanic character who serves to focus Treadup's preoccupations with scientific advancement for the Chinese and with the possibilities of a meaningful land reform and industrialization program for China's villages, one that could be carried out through independent initiatives, away from the ideological manipulations of either the Kuomintang or the CCP. He is modeled, pretty clearly, after the remarkable "Jimmy" Yen, whose community in Ting-hsien was, along with some of Liang Shu-ming's experiments in Shantung, among the most hopeful of the new developments in China that were wrecked beyond recovery by the onset of the Second World War.

Inevitably, in a novel this ambitious, with such a large cast of characters, the reader who has begun to accept Treadup's world with complete absorption may be jolted out of acceptance by the inclusion of real historical figures. Obviously the great reformer Liang Ch'ich'ao never met Treadup, nor did Vice President Li Yuan-hung, nor the warlord Feng Yü-hsiang. Why not give fictional names to these men as he does to Johnny Wu? Sometimes, of course, such name-dropping can lead to amusing flickers of self-recognition—when the Treadup family meets the Herseys, for instance, or when David Treadup idly notices the rocky cliffs in the Yangtze gorges that some readers will recall as the same ones on which the agonized coolies labored in Hersey's *A Single Pebble*. But the meetings with the families of John Service and Owen Lattimore, each with an accompanying brief diatribe at the wrecking of these men's lives by the follies of the McCarthy period, do not seem to me to add anything to Treadup's tale.

But that is a quibble, and *The Call* is big enough, subtle enough, and both historically and emotionally convincing enough to be one of those books we can lose ourselves in with profit and delight. I think it will be deservedly popular, and perceived as the capstone to a writing career of enviable range and originality. David Treadup will be remembered, even if his ashes could not be buried in China, as he had hoped.

JONATHAN D. SPENCE

Jonathan D. Spence teaches Chinese history at Yale. His most recent books are *The Gate of Heavenly Peace* and *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (Viking).

THE FIXER

Mountbatten: A Biography by Philip Ziegler

(Knopf, 784 pp., $24.95)

How does one best describe the relationship between "great men" in history and the enormous changes that occur under their direction? While there are writers following Carlyle who believe that a dominant, charismatic leader can impose his will upon the world around him, many notable historical figures have been rather more modest about their roles. When Bismarck, certainly the most decisive political leader in 19th-century Europe, was asked in old age to explain the reasons for his success, he declared: "Man can neither create nor direct the stream of time. He can only travel upon it and steer with more or less skill and experience; he can suffer shipwreck and go aground, and can also arrive in safe harbors." And if the Iron Chancellor's listeners protested at this unusual act of self-effacement, he was not alone in his views. Indeed, this reference to the larger forces of history—that is, to a combination of circumstances which makes possible at a certain time that which was hitherto unobtainable—is quite a common refrain among "great men." Luther, Cromwell, Napoleon, Gladstone, Lenin, even Hitler, all believed that they were the instruments—albeit the uniquely talented and chosen instruments—of some larger religious or political movement.

YET if indeed the best way to explain the achievement of a great historical figure is to analyze the constant interaction between the "man" and his "times," the biographer's task becomes so much more difficult. The particular actions and opinions of the subject have to be set against the larger panorama, his claims measured from different viewpoints, his understanding compared with the understanding of others. Above all, the biographer must continually try (but not in an overheavy way) to account for conjuncture: to explain how exactly it was that our hero was the right person in the right place at the right time. This is a large demand to make of a biography, and it is not surprising that most attempts fall some way short of accomplishment.

Although few would be likely to argue that Earl Mountbatten was of the historical stature of the giants mentioned—he himself aptly described as "soft in the head" an admirer who judged him greater than Churchill—there can be no doubt that Philip Ziegler's new biography magnificently succeeds in this task of describing both the man and his times. To be sure, given the glamour attached to royalty, the colorful nature of Mountbatten's wartime and peacetime careers, his friendships with Charlie Chaplin, Noel Coward, and a host of other headline-catching figures, his famous and at times turbulent marriage to Edwina Ashley, and his tragic death at the hands of the IRA, virtually *any* study of Mountbatten is guaranteed publicity and some commercial success. Ziegler's wide researches (he had unrestricted access to Mountbatten's own revealing papers) and his clever, relaxed, sure-footed style make it doubly so in this case. But finally what has turned a good study into a first-class one is Ziegler's skill in unobtrusively placing his subject into the proper context.

Born in 1900 as His Serene Highness Prince Louis of Battenberg, great-grandson of Queen Victoria, nephew of the czar of Russia, and cousin to the future king of England, our hero had connections and advantages that few, if any, contemporaries possessed. He was also inordinately handsome, charming, and a persuasive speaker; after his mar-

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riage to one of Europe's richest heiresses, he was well endowed in the material sense too. What is more, as Ziegler repeatedly and frankly shows, Mountbatten exploited these advantages to the full. Whether it was privately lobbying his royal connections in order to secure the right naval posting, or employing his charms upon doubtful superiors and suspicious foreigners, or using his wealth to procure the good things in life (from fast cars to polo ponies), he showed no hesitation. Though he never quoted the "Parable of the Talents," Mountbatten obviously approved of its message.

All this, it is clear, would have ensured that young "Dickie" would go quite far in life—both in his beloved Royal Navy, and as a minor member of the royal family. Still, it would not have gained him international renown, turned him into a household name in Britain, India, and elsewhere, and made him the subject of books, films, and television series. As Mountbatten shudderingly recalled in later life, his cousin "poor David"—Prince of Wales, then the short-reigned Edward VIII—also possessed great charm and even greater connections, but he "blew it all" by his feckless character and bad judgments. Obviously royal ties and popular appeal were not enough.

WHAT took Mountbatten to a higher level was, indeed, conjuncture: the suitability of the person to the times. Behind the facade of the well-connected, polo-playing naval officer there lay a fierce drive and ambition to get to the top—in the first instance, of the Royal Navy (his father had been its professional head, first sea lord, until forced to retire in 1914 because of the German family connections). As a middle-level officer, Mountbatten worked like a horse—and worked, and charmed, his crews accordingly. *His* ship, *his* squadron must be the best in the fleet. He memorized the names of all his crew, he was constantly coming up with new ideas (not always brilliant) for weapons or tactics or signals, and he could stand 18-hour days for weeks or months on end. He was not a great intellectual, nor, on the other hand, was he an especially adroit handler of either fast cars or fast destroyers; but he more than made up for that in drive, hard work, keenness, and leadership. "What he could do with superlative aplomb," Ziegler concludes, "was to identify the object at which he was aiming, select the method which was most likely to achieve it, and force it through to its conclusion. A powerful, analytical mind of crystalline clarity, a superabundance of energy, great persuasive powers, endless resilience in the face of setback or disaster rendered him the most formidable of operators." In view of the tasks ahead, he would need all of those qualities.

There was one other, rather unusual element at work: his strong belief in democracy and reform, and his lack of prejudice about race, class, or religion. Exactly how he reconciled this egalitarianism with his own royal background, his family riches, his love of pomp and ceremony, is not clear. His wife, Edwina, felt even more strongly radical, and was often accused by right-wing British and American newspapers of being a crypto-communist. The only paper that Mountbatten took—and, occasionally, read—was the left-leaning *New Statesman*. Although in many respects he was politically neutral or even naive, Mountbatten certainly detested fascism more strongly than communism in the 1930s, and seems to have got on better with the Labour governments of Attlee and Wilson than with

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the Tories. This was, to say the least, an uncommon streak in an aristocrat—which, together with his other qualities, was precisely what made Mountbatten different.

Although this is a very fat book, Ziegler wisely does not spend very much space upon the first half of Mountbatten's life. By page 150, he is no longer the dashing destroyer captain of H. M. S. Kelly, but on the point of being placed by Churchill in charge of Combined Operations, a post that would require all of Mountbatten's energy, organizational skills, tact, and finesse. Given Britain's strategic position in 1941 and its need to find ways to reenter Europe (whether by large operations, or by commando pinpricks), this command was a vital one. The post was also delicate, to say the least; interservice rivalries were entrenched, and the British chiefs of staff were suspicious of having this glamorous young commodore foisted upon them, creating a separate organization, making claims upon the country's scarce resources, and having a say in grand strategy.

Very prudently, therefore, Mountbatten kept a low profile in the early stages, and concentrated upon the job of building up an interservice command from scratch. In view of all the constraints, no striking successes were possible; on the contrary, the failure of the Dieppe Raid of 1943 (although not really Mountbatten's fault) raised serious questions about Combined Operations. Still, the experiences gained in these early years were crucial in preparing for Operation OVERLORD—as both the British and the American chiefs of staff warmly admitted when they stood on the shores of France in June 1944.

BY THAT TIME Mountbatten had been promoted, still at a breathtakingly early age, to be supreme allied commander, South-East Asia. Here he had an even more enormous task: to weld together an interallied, interservice structure in the face of national prejudice and service rivalries, at the same time as he endeavored to mollify Chaing Kai-Shek, to deal with Indian and other local problems, to aid General Slim in rebuilding the morale of the "forgotten" Fourteenth Army, and to constantly beg the combined chiefs of staff for the means to effect a counteroffensive. South-East Asia Command was the least glamorous, and the worst supported, of any of the allied commands; and it says a lot for Mountbatten's personality that he made it look and feel as if it had been a considerable success.

It was especially in the final stages of his command, after Japan's defeat, that Mountbatten found himself making ever more political than strategic decisions, as he wrestled with the claims of the Burmese, the Vietnamese, and the Indonesian nationalists for control of lands where the old European colonial powers were seeking to reimpose their rule. Much as Mountbatten disliked the breakdown of order and the agitations of radicals, it seemed to him both immoral and stupid to stand in the way of genuine national self-determination movements. On the contrary, he felt they should be given all the help possible to find their own feet, and to remain, through ties of friendship and gratitude, in the Western camp. If this was an attitude that outraged many a Dutchman and a Frenchman, and made diehard British Tories purple with anger, it was one much approved by Attlee's new administration in London, eager to shed at least some of its imperial responsibilities.

AS Whitehall faced up to the awful task of withdrawing from the Indian subcontinent, and of attempting to handle the irreconcilable claims of Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, and Indian princes, not a few observers saw in Mountbatten the "natural" choice to bring negotiations to a conclusion. The third part of this biography, a full ten chapters on the traumatic Indian years of 1946 and 1947, shows Ziegler at his best—and Mountbatten at his superlative best. Here was a field in which complete success was impossible from the start. What would satisfy Nehru's Congress Party, for example, would drive Jinnah's Pakistan movement to arms. On the other hand, unless some settlement was reached, a bloody, ferocious civil war across the entire subcontinent was also a strong possibility. Only a man who had the trust of the Indians (and at least the respect of the Moslems), full powers from a supportive Attlee government, immense quantities of patience, firmness, tact, and sheer physical endurance could have done what Mountbatten did month after month after month. By this stage in his career, it seems clear, his weaknesses had evaporated, and his strengths had become more marked than ever.

Compared with his Indian days, Mountbatten's later period as first sea lord and then as chief of the defense staff was much less exciting—although the chapter on the Suez crisis of 1956, where he so strongly disagreed with Eden's policies that he almost resigned, is very eye-opening, and points again to Mountbatten's sympathy toward genuine nationalist movements. For an American readership, however, perhaps the most relevant chapters are those dealing with the efforts to create an integrated British defense structure. In an age when sea power, land power, and air power were no longer fully separate entities—Pentagon reformers take note—it seemed absurd to Mountbatten that the three services should be allowed to go their merry own way. Once again, this made him the ally of British governments keen to solve an appalling problem (as much financial as organizational) and the enemy of entrenched service interests; the only real difference from Combined Operations days was that Mountbatten was now above the defense chiefs in rank, rather than below them. Without his personality and prestige, it is hard to see how the reforms could have been pushed as far as they were.

IN HIS later years, indeed, Mountbatten functioned as a sort of deus ex machina, rolled out to chair thorny investigations (for example, into prison reform), and entreated to try his hand at solving this or the other intractable colonial and nationalities problem—Cyprus, or Rhodesia. Old age, and the need to conserve his energies, saved him from accepting most of those offers, but their very frequency demonstrated the extent of his reputation. He was, in Lee Kuan Yew's later words to his daughter Pamela, "the greatest fixer of all time"—a title Mountbatten would have relished. Yet he was not a "city boss" sort of fixer at all. He was, rather, like one of the last of the 19th-century noblesse oblige Whigs, pressing for reform while personifying stability, a firm believer in humanitarian ideals yet with a practical (and a tactical) sense of how to accomplish things, a warrior prince and an impressive organizer, the consultant to European royalty and the friend of the Indian peasant.

Had he been the usual aristocratic playboy or a diehard reactionary, then his career and his achievements would have been much less noteworthy. Had

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he been a "thinker" rather than a "doer," he also would have been a lesser man. If viewers of Noel Coward's film *In Which We Serve* saw Mountbatten as the charismatic leader of destroyers, history is more likely to regard him as that attractive, statesmanlike figure who steered much more important vessels down the stream of time and into "safe harbors . . . with more or less skill and experience." Death at the hands of an IRA assassin merely enhanced an already towering reputation.

PAUL KENNEDY

Paul Kennedy is Dilworth Professor of History at Yale. His latest book is *Strategy and Diplomacy 1860-1945* (Allen and Unwin).

WRITER ON A HOT TIN ROOF

The Kindness of Strangers: The Life of Tennessee Williams by Donald Spoto

(Little, Brown, 409 pp., $19.95)

There are no second acts in the lives of American writers because everyone gets drunk during the intermission. At least that's the conclusion to be drawn from the biographies of one generation: Carson McCullers, Jane Bowles, William Inge, Truman Capote, and Tennessee Williams. Of that group, I can only think of Paul Bowles, Gore Vidal, and Ned Rorem who have survived and are still working. They also seem to be the three with the widest culture and interests.

But I don't want to fall into the very mistake most of their biographers make, who regard alcoholism as psychologically caused rather than as a physiological result. Again and again boozing is presented as passionate, life-affirming paganism gone awry, or as the insulation of a sensitive soul against a brutal milieu. Williams himself subscribed to the metaphysical theory of drink, as in this passage from *The Night of the Iguana*, when a New England spinster addresses an Irish drunk who's having the D.T.'s:

> *Hannah:* Liquor isn't your problem, Mr. Shannon.
> *Shannon:* What is my problem, Miss Jelkes?
> *Hannah:* The oldest one in the world—the need to believe in something or in someone—almost anyone—almost anything . . . something.

Never is alcoholism or drug addiction seen in writers' biographies as a self-perpetuating habit and a chemical dependency that leads to growing isolation, confusion, and depression. The artist-as-martyr continues to be a potent romantic myth; the writer is punished by alcoholism for having dared to steal heavenly fire. No wonder it's Prometheus's liver that bird keeps pecking at. Alcoholism-as-retribution, say, makes a better literary theme than alcoholism-as-disease, unless, of course, the reader finds the perspective false. Dare I suggest that many biographies (and even some novels, such as *Under the Volcano*) that take the romantic approach to drink are beginning to seem dated—writable perhaps, but no longer readable?

Donald Spoto comments extensively on Williams's vast oeuvre—his 25 full-length plays, more than 40 short plays, his volume of memoirs, two novels, 60-odd short stories, some hundred poems, published letters, and occasional pieces. Although Williams was immensely noticed during most of his writing career (there are 33 volumes of collected reviews of his work), *The Kindness of Strangers* is the first biography. I tired of the show-bizzy "philosophy" of Spoto's text, the "she-was-a-warm-wise-wonderful-human-being" kind of prose; but I do admire the book's thoroughness and its obvious affection for its subject. Williams is a man any lesser spirit would have quickly come to detest (the occupational hazard of most biographers). But Spoto never loses sight of Williams's genius, and never lets his excessive knowledge of the playwright's failures as an artist

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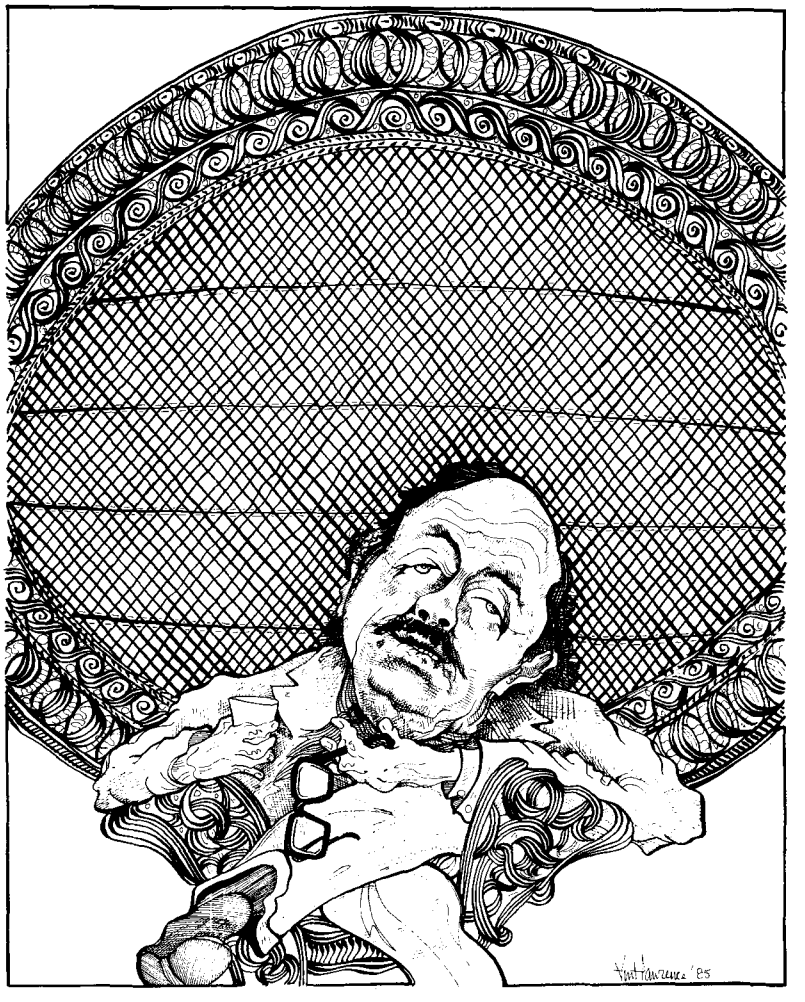
or man lead to condescension.

Tom Williams was the child of a mismatch—and instantly we're plunged into his most autobiographical play, *The Glass Menagerie*. His mother, Edwina Davis, was the daughter of a refined Episcopalian clergyman, and in her girlhood she was besieged by "gentlemen callers" until she married a coarse, hard-drinking, womanizing salesman. Their first child was Rose. Two years later, in 1911, Tom was born in Columbus, Mississippi, followed in eight years by a younger brother, Walter. The family settled in St. Louis, an industrial city quite alien to their previous life in genteel small towns.

Growing up gay in the classic American way, Tom was a sissy who hated sports and whom his father dubbed "Miss Nancy." He never showed much talent as a student; he preferred daydreaming or playing with his sister to everything else. Nor did he discover sex of any sort until he was 26. Williams and Kerouac are among the few writers I know of who didn't read much. Despite this lack of curiosity, Williams did manage early on to discover both Strindberg and Chekhov, who influenced his major plays. The violent confrontations of Strindberg's unhappy couples in his realistic plays and the symbolic fantasias of his dream plays surface in Williams's work. So does the poetic realism of Chekhov's lovable incompetents in minutely observed, tightly structured but apparently disorganized dramas, so unstable in their shifts of tone from comedy to tragedy, from wisdom to banality.

Tom's low grades and the family's strained budget during the Depression caused his father to withdraw him from college in 1932 (before graduation) and set him to work in a shoe factory. By this point, however, Tom had begun his rigorous, lifelong habit of writing daily and prolifically. He first received recognition as a poet, although today his poems read like a blend of A. E. Housman and Sara Teasdale, a fusion that isn't admirable but is certainly likable. He was living at home and looking on as his mother encouraged "gentlemen callers" to visit her terrified, fragile daughter Rose. Both of the older children, exposed to their parents' quarrels and the gibes of working-class neighbor kids, showed signs of strain. Tom had a shocking anxiety attack and



TENNESSEE WILLIAMS BY VINT LAWRENCE

Rose began her decline into insanity. By 1936 Rose was being counseled by psychiatrists—to no avail. The next year she witnessed her drunk father beat her mother; when he then made a pass at Rose, she became hysterical for several days. Foreshadowing Stella's rejection of Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Mrs. Williams, unable to accept Rose's allegation against her father, gave permission for Rose to be lobotomized. For the rest of her long life, Rose was to be institutionalized, except for brief stays with Tom.

After going back to school, this time to the University of Iowa, Tom finally received a degree in English at the age of 27. He drifted to New Orleans, lived in boarding rooms, slept with men for the first time, and, with his sharp instinct for his "image," changed his name to Tennessee (his maternal grandparents, whom he adored, lived in Memphis). He started drinking, carousing, raising hell—and writing the plays and stories that would provide him with literary capital for years to come. Indeed, one of his very last plays was *Vieux Carré*, based on those New Orleans days.

A consolation prize in a literary contest led Williams to his agent, Audrey Wood; and she, after a long struggle, managed to launch her client into stardom. By the time he was in his thirties, Williams was an international celebrity with *The Glass Menagerie* (1944), soon followed by *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1947). More than any other American playwright, Williams wrote plays that were not only hits but also enduring works of the repertory. They include *Summer and Smoke* (1948), *The Rose Tattoo* (1951), *Cat On a Hot Tin Roof* (1955), *Baby Doll* (1957), *Suddenly Last Summer* (1958), *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959), and *Night of the Iguana* (1961).

Williams was an early master of publicity. In the sixties, when his talent was drying up, he was turning himself—his excesses and reverses—into an eye-catching product. Only Andy Warhol and Norman Mailer understood as well as he how to give good interviews. On the Sunday before a new play would open, Williams would write in *The New York Times* about his disputes with his psychoanalyst—confessions that were fatally readable. Or he'd announce his conversion to Catholicism—and then, a year later, his disillusion with the church. Or he'd tell an interviewer, "I'm a built-in definition of hysteria. I hate myself. I feel I bore peo-

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ple—and that I'm too physically repulsive." Of course the slipping in of the word "too" suggests comic perspectives, and indeed in his later writings Williams was often comically grotesque, obscenely gothic.

A PERSISTENT sentimentality haunts even the most successful of Tennessee Williams's plays. If sentimentality means unearned and unrendered emotion, then we must find sentimental his habitual recourse to such an automatic bid for sympathy as madness (an undefined, "pure" state of madness), just as his invariable linking of madness to sexual frustration (or, conversely, to sexual violation) seems blandly and routinely Freudian. Sympathy for the crazed sex victim is the expected audience response in *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and *Summer and Smoke*.

But if such expectations give these plays their lurid appeal, as irresistible as a Sousa march, their enduring value lies elsewhere—in their ventriloquism. Williams recognized that great theater begins with great talkers, and that great talkers obey two rules: they never sound like anyone else and they never say anything directly. In *Streetcar*, Blanche confesses to having only "sixty-five measly cents in coin of the realm," just as earlier she announces, "I can't stand a naked light bulb, any more than I can a rude remark or a vulgar action." This is a line of varying poetic stress—"light bulb" an emphatic spondee, "rude remark" an elegant, old-fashioned anapest, and "vulgar action" a pair of irritable but helpless trochees. Or the mother in *The Glass Menagerie* veers hysterically from faded coquetry ("All of a sudden—heavens! Already summer!—I ran to the trunk an' pulled out this light dress—Terribly old! Historical almost! But feels so good—so good an' cool, y'know . . .") to biblical cadences of reproach ("You are the only young man that I know of who ignores the fact that the future becomes the present, the present the past, and the past turns into everlasting regret if you don't plan for it!").

Amanda, Blanche, Serafina (in *The Rose Tattoo*), Big Daddy (in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*)—these are only some of the great talkers Williams invented and recorded. Here's Big Daddy: "I haven't been able to stand the sight, sound, or smell of that woman for forty years

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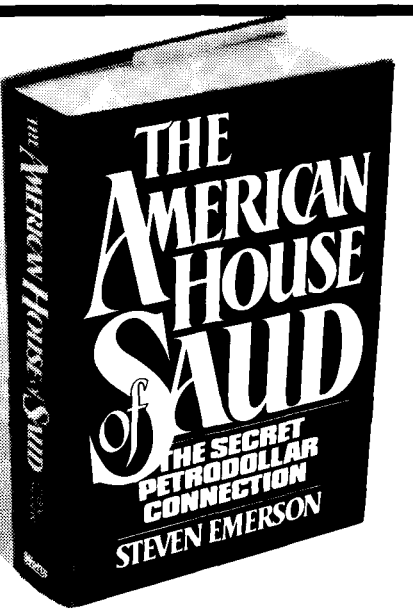

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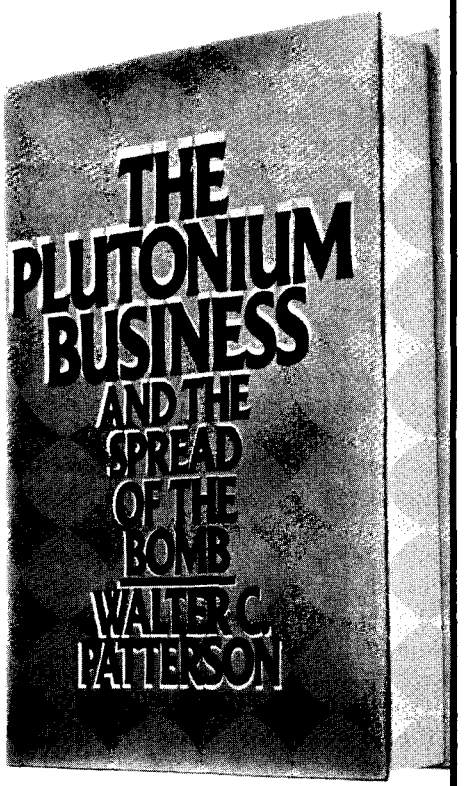

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now!—even when I *laid* her!—regular as a piston." Like a line in W. S. Merwin, "even when I laid her!" modifies both the phrase that precedes and follows it.

Sometimes, like Shakespeare's Richard II, Williams's characters aren't given actions adequate to their verbal splendors, but even their undramatized soliloquies outshine the hardworking dialogue of lesser characters by lesser writers. For lesser characters are lesser poets. As it turns out, quite contrary to what we learned in school, the most memorable people in plays are not representative figures. They are not condensations of the normal. No, they are unique, and if they fascinate us on stage they do so because they'd also fascinate us at a cocktail party. We can't stop listening to them and looking at them, not because the intellectual content of their speech is so gripping but because their timing, their dilations and contractions, their periphrases, their musical instinct for rubato are spellbinding.

MANY OF Williams's intimates (as well as his biographer) ascribe his decline to the death of his lover Frank Merlo in the early sixties. Merlo, a New Jersey-born Navy veteran and a second-generation Sicilian, had been Williams's long-suffering companion for 15 years, someone who had never flattered the master but rather evaluated his work with acuity and lent his chaotic, peripatetic life some dignity and stability. And Merlo was the one with the charm. People took up with the couple because they were attracted by Williams's fame, but if they stuck around they did so because they were seduced by Merlo's easygoing amiability.

I met Tennessee Williams once toward the end of his life, at a party given in Key West by James Merrill, the poet, and David Jackson. The afternoon before the cocktail party, David called to say Tennessee would be bringing his sister Rose, who'd gotten it into her head she was the true queen of England. We were instructed to bow to her and call her "Your Majesty."

I passed these protocol instructions along to my houseguest, the crusty octogenarian composer Virgil Thomson. Virgil said, "I'm too old to jump through Tennessee's hoop. I'll call Rose 'ma'am,' which is a good Southern expression—*and* a perfectly good way to address a queen."

Looking tan, sober, and fit, Tennessee made a late entrance with his companions, the actor John Uecker (who resembles the young Marlon Brando) and Rose. I noticed right away that all three of them had a wad of yellowed cotton in their right ears and that when separated they still kept communicating with each other through little eerie grins. Rose, with short styled hair, clear skin, and huge sapphire eyes, behaved with composure, even when she stole all the soap and matches in the house. If she said incoherent things, John Uecker slapped his thigh with amusement as though she were concocting delightful Dada nonsense to entertain us. When we left, Virgil insisted that Rose-as-Queen was Tennessee's delusion, not his sister's.

Spoto includes a touching anecdote about Rose. In the autumn of 1949, when Rose was already 40, Tennessee visited her at her hospital in Ossining, New York. When he came back to the car, the multimillionaire was clutching a ten-dollar bill. Rose had given him the money as he was leaving.

"Tom," she had whispered, "I know how hard you are working at the shoe warehouse. I know you want to be a poet, and I believe in you. I have been saving some change for you, and I hope this will help things to be a little easier. If you will just be patient, I know good things will be ahead. Always remember I believe in you."

EDMUND WHITE

Edmund White's novel *Caracole* will be published in September by E. P. Dutton.

IN SEARCH OF SOLIDARITY

The Needs of Strangers
by Michael Ignatieff

(Viking, 156 pp., $14.95)

The core of this new book by Michael Ignatieff consists of four elegant essays, a series of meditations on human need. The first and fourth essays are focused on community; the second and third on God. Ignatieff means to illuminate the need for particularist belonging and the need for universal or even transcendent understanding. The essays are also focused more narrowly: the first on King Lear's "O, reason not the need!" the fourth on a kind of dialogue between Rousseau and Adam Smith; the second on the Augustinian tradition in Christianity, the third on David Hume's stoic and secular death (and on Boswell's most unstoic response, at once horrified and curious).

The importance of membership, even for kings, and the difficulties of membership in the new world of market capitalism; the radical light that sin and mortality cast on the human condition and the meaning for modernity of mere dissolution—these are large topics for so short a book. It is a tribute to Ignatieff's skill and penetration that he manages not only to evoke them but also to say something concrete and serious about each of them. He has a good eye for the critical detail and a strong sense of cultural difference. His essay on Rousseau and Smith injects a new realism into discussions of "civic virtue," and his essay on Hume gives a new meaning to that old standby of social theory, the concept of secularization.

The problem with Ignatieff's book lies not in its core but in its frame. His introduction sets a theoretical agenda that the delicate meditations cannot possibly fulfill. He writes there from the standpoint of the welfare state, and he poses three questions. First, when can we speak for the needs of other people (the "strangers" of his title)? Second, can we define what human beings need in order to flourish? And third, are there some needs that the welfare state cannot provide? If religious belief is one of the things we need, the answer to that last question is obviously yes. But God, who figures largely in the middle essays, has no part in the introduction or the conclusion. Front and back, Ignatieff is concerned primarily with solidarity, honor, respect, dignity, and love. The list is repeated several times with

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only minor variation; he doesn't seem to have much difficulty answering the second question. The first, so far as I can tell, is not addressed at all. So the issue is this: can the modern political community, organized as it must be in some welfarist fashion, offer us any hope of solidarity, honor, respect, and so on?

How might one go about answering this question? Ignatieff suggests one possible beginning when he writes: "Giving the aged poor their pension and providing them with medical care may be a necessary condition for their self-respect and dignity, but it is not a sufficient condition. It is the manner of the giving that counts and [its] moral basis. . . ." He doesn't develop the point, or ever return to it, but it is an important point, which might well open into a larger argument about the character and organization of the welfare state. Welfare itself, we might say, is the necessary condition of human dignity, but the sufficient condition, the creative force, must be something more like mutual aid and shared concern: a "participatory" welfare state, then, where clientage is not the only mode of participation. There is, however, no argument of this sort in Ignatieff's book; nor is it really what his high-flown introduction calls for. He writes against a background of political defeat and disillusion; the "manner of giving" isn't going to be reformed; or, its reform still won't give us what we need. In any case, Ignatieff is after bigger game.

He wants us to stare with him into the very meaning of human existence. We aren't asked to do that for very long, so it is easier than one might think. In the four essays the claim to deep meaning is more occasional and more graceful. And when he returns to the three big questions in his conclusion, Ignatieff has painfully (or refreshingly, depending on one's taste) little to say. He adds a touch of Greenness: "it is just possible that our need is taking a new form, finding a new object: the fragile green and blue earth itself"—along with God, love, honor, and so on. But mostly our human condition is needy in the same way at the end as at the beginning. Mindful that he has not made much progress, Ignatieff suggests that what we need most is a language in which to talk about our needs. Perhaps he should first have acquired the language and then written his essays?

And yet the essays are very good; Ignatieff writes well so long as he has a subject to write about. The cobbler should stick to his last. Political theory has to be about something, and the human need for earth, God, and love is not something it can plausibly be about. Ignatieff is quick enough to acknowledge the limits of politics and theory—too quick, I would say, since he hasn't really explored those limits. And then he strains for a poetic revelation beyond them, which he signally fails to achieve. I can understand the straining; it is a common temptation among political theorists dissatisfied with their trade, who sense deep meanings they cannot quite express. The problem isn't, it seems to me, that we don't yet have a proper philosophical language. In truth, mere prose will never do, and Ignatieff, like many of us, can only quote poetry.

MICHAEL WALZER

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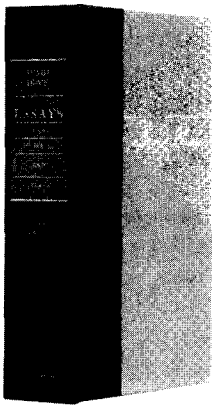

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THE MUDDLE EAST

The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict: Making America's Middle East Policy, from Truman to Reagan
by Steven L. Spiegel

(University of Chicago Press, 522 pp., $24.95)

Steven L. Spiegel, a political scientist at UCLA, has written a very big book that traces the making of American policy in the Middle East from the last years of Roosevelt's presidency, which serve as a kind of prologue, to the first three years of President Reagan's, which serve as an epilogue. The research is awesome: 429 closely packed pages of detail, 60 pages of references to memoirs, state papers, firsthand and secondhand accounts, and interviews. At least on the American side, almost nothing is obscure. Memoirs pour from our presidents and secretaries of state—not to mention from lesser participants—almost as soon as the cares of office are lifted. Henry Kissinger's memoirs are exceptional in their length and their verbatim use of confidential state papers. Yet Spiegel does not seem to lack for material from periods before and after his dominance of American foreign policy either. In fact, memoirs are often hardly necessary in view of how much else is available. Spiegel scarcely breaks his stride in recounting the Mideast involvements, initiatives, and policies of the Reagan years, even though the material is not yet as rich as for earlier admininstrations; so far only former secretary of state Alexander Haig has told his story.

The subject of the Arab-Israeli conflict is of enormous interest. If Armageddon comes, it may well be there. Given the leaking sieve of American policy-making, it is hard for the historian to offer genuine revelations, but on Armageddon, and the president's unsettling interest in that possibility, Spiegel comes up with something not generally known:

> In private conversations, especially with Jews, [Reagan] often quoted from Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth*, stunning his listeners with analogies between biblical references and contemporary events. In fall 1983, speaking . . . by telephone with AIPAC's chief, Thomas A. Dine, about the situation in Lebanon, he said, ". . . You know, I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament, and the signs foretelling Armageddon. . . ."

How policy is made, who influences its making, how responsive it is to American national interests are all questions of great importance. There have been various fiercely conflicting interpretations of how Middle East policy is made: by the American Jewish community, operating through its influence on congressmen, or on the press, or directly on presidents and their administrations; by the oil companies, operating through the same channels; by the State Department bureaucracy; by Arab money, or Arab economic power in the last decade to place huge arms orders, and so on.

One cannot expect Spiegel's account to settle matters, but it overwhelms any other in its detail, its precision, and (to this reader, at any rate) its objectivity. In his other writings Spiegel may be a partisan in the Arab-Israeli conflict, but for the greater part of this book it would be hard to tell what his position is (although some partisan tendencies are visible in the Reagan section). His is a meticulous, dispassionate account of internal arguments and maneuvers, and of the secret and semipublic and public policies.

And there are conclusions. In the crunch it is the president who makes foreign policy. He has a remarkable capacity, as this book reveals, to stand against the Jewish community, the oil companies, the press, and Congress. Obviously this power to control American foreign policy is not unlimited. The president does have political—that is, electoral—considerations in mind, but what is surprising is how *little* he has them in mind. Nixon said, on many occasions, that he was as little beholden to the Jews as to the blacks. Other presidents can be quoted to the same effect—and to judge by the record, they are right. Again and again a president decided that giving arms to Arab neigh-

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bors (and enemies) of Israel was necessary. Again and again the Jewish community was mobilized against the move. Again and again, in the crunch, the Jewish community seemed to lose. If there is an electoral explanation behind this pattern, perhaps it goes like this: Republicans knew they would never get that many Jewish votes, and Democrats knew they couldn't lose that many. (In 1980 John Anderson changed that calculation, but that was exceptional.)

BUT emphasizing the primacy of the presidency is not the whole story, obviously. First of all, presidents have other things to worry about than the Middle East. They also enter office with their prejudices, their particular areas of ignorance, their general view of what the key elements in American foreign policy should be, their trusted advisers. They must also deal with their permanent bureaucracies in the State and Defense departments. They are affected by their own reactions, positive or negative, to foreign leaders. (President Carter did not like Menachem Begin, which may be easy to understand, and did like Hafez al-Assad, which is harder to understand.) The result is a picture of American policy startlingly different from what the regular newspaper reader of the past 40 years is likely to carry away.

To the newspaper reader, and to the Arab world, American policy seems determinedly and immovably on Israel's side. The actual record shows, however, an incredible kaleidoscope of policy that has never (yet) consigned Israel to military destruction at the hands of the Arabs, but hardly because of any steadfastness of vision or commitment. If Israeli leaders are wary about the steadiness of American foreign policy commitments, nothing in Spiegel's book will reassure them. We are presented with a kind of Perils of Pauline script, in which Israel is (always) saved at the end. But it is generally saved by its own strength, action, and determination, rather than by any American steadiness of support.

The presidents themselves have varied greatly in their friendliness to Israel. There have, moreover, been permanent elements among the policy-making establishment opposed to shaping policy around support for Israel. Professional American foreign policy makers are hardly ever friends of Israel—for obvious reasons. They see the Arab world, beyond it the Moslem world, beyond that the Third World—row upon row of countries; and on the other side only Israel with its accompaniment of hysterical American Jews. It is perfectly clear where any balanced and professional view of American foreign policy interest leads.

The other permanent influence on American policy-making is the military, which, by the record of this book, is unrelievedly pacific. Its leaders never want to go to war, and gloomily they fear the worst whenever they do. Consider 1967, for example, with President Johnson, a great friend of Israel, in office. America's word, given by President Eisenhower, required some response when Nasser closed off Israel's access to the Red Sea. In his account of the various positions argued in the White House, Spiegel reports that "the third group, centered in the Pentagon, did not so much favor any policy as oppose American military activity of any kind." This comes as no surprise, in light of the almost unchanging Pentagon position, from the time of General Marshall and Secretary Forrestal to that of Secretary Weinberger. Any American who fears military adventurism will be reassured by this account. Anyone who thinks there may be times and places where military power must be used will be alarmed.

One can only imagine the reactions of Israelis. They saved themselves in the face of American inaction in 1967, and survived an overwhelming assault in 1973 while the United States dithered, and, as we know now from the all-revealing Henry Kissinger, while he doled out essential military resupplies with a calculation designed to make Israel pliable. One must conclude—though nowhere does Spiegel say this—that Kissinger was also playing with danger; in the inevitable confusion of "how much is enough" in a battle of unremitting intensity, he was risking Israel's defeat. The two most recent presidents have been one whom Israelis saw as steadily unfriendly (Spiegel gives sufficient evidence of this) and another who is bemused by the inevitably ambiguous (for Israel) Armageddon. Having read this book, one does not

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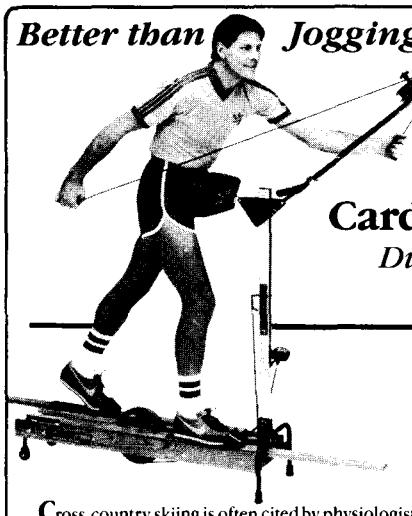

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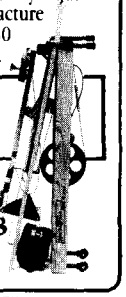

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envy the role of the Israeli statesman.

As for Americans, it is not reassuring for them either. Anyone who believes the professionals should be given greater power over the president (I leave aside the question of how, given the American constitutional system, this should be done) will have to think again. They do not come out looking very perspicacious. There are many occasions for irony or comedy in this story. Spiegel never takes advantage of them, which makes for a less amusing book, but for one which convinces the reader that the story is just as he puts it. Consider, for example, the roll call of American dignitaries who opposed the partition of Palestine, arms to nascent Israel, and recognition of the Jewish state: "Marshall, Lovett, Forrestal, Kennan, Rusk." Israel, they were convinced, could never survive the Arab assault without American aid, and observing the rule that American arms must never be risked, that was good enough reason to do nothing to assist it.

I have introduced more of a point of view into this story than Spiegel himself does. He does not consider it from the perspective of American national interest, and certainly not from the standpoint of Israel's national interest. He writes, rather, in the context of academic debate on international relations, which fortunately does not intrude on the story. When he has finished his analysis he soberly considers various theories and decides that neither "systems theory," nor "bureaucratic and organizational theories," nor "pluralist theory" quite sums up the story. His own view he calls the theory of "the presidential elite." The president and the group of advisers he brings into office with him are of paramount importance.

Has this pattern served America well? Not very well, one will conclude from this study. Not at all well, the doyens of American foreign policy regularly decide. The policy makers brought into power by each president know far more about Israel than about its Arab enemies, know more Jews than Arabs, and are surrounded by professionals who correct the imbalance—but whose own record does not inspire confidence. The consistent theme of their stewardship is that they manage a foreign policy that more often than not sees Russia as the main enemy, and that tries to maintain a balance in the Middle East between Israel and the Arabs.

This approach turns out to have served Israel well enough. The reason that it has worked, from the evidence of this book, is not because American Jews effectively push policy makers to act against what they see as America's best interest. Rather, the policy has ended up suiting Israel because again and again American efforts to find and implement solutions—generally ones that make Israel uneasy—run into intractable conflicts within the Arab world itself. Indeed, Arabs may rightly conclude from this book that if the Arab world could have presented something like a united front on policy (aside from a united front that offered only nonrecognition and no concessions), American policy makers might have gotten more for them than they have gotten through warfare. When one puts down this lengthy and still unfinished story, one cannot help but think that the canniest of them all was Anwar Sadat.

NATHAN GLAZER

Nathan Glazer's most recent book is *Ethnic Dilemmas 1964-1984* (Harvard University Press).

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COME TO CANADA

Home Truths: Sixteen Stories by Mavis Gallant

(Random House, 336 pp., $17.95)

"Location," Eudora Welty once wrote, "is the crossroads of circumstance, the proving ground of 'What happened? Who's here? Who's coming?'—and that is the heart's field."

No one knows the importance of location better than Mavis Gallant, who has made it her lifelong business to chart the ways in which mere geography can affect a character's very soul. Herself a Canadian now permanently transplanted to France, she is also sensitive to the results of *dis*location. Never is she more skillful, more warily alert, than when she is describing the feelings of foreigners—even if they're just very slightly foreign: French Canadians among English Canadians, or a

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woman among men, or a child among grown-ups.

Her newest collection is divided into three parts. The six stories in the part called "At Home" are set in Canada, but in several different versions of Canada. In "Thank You for the Lovely Tea," it's a country almost more English than England—a place where Queen Victoria's birthday is still celebrated some 30 years after her death, and where any outward show of emotion is condemned as "American." In "Saturday," which is a wonderfully rich, tumbling, seemingly uncontrolled story about a large French-Canadian family, it is a country split cleanly in half; the father cannot tell his five sons-in-law apart because they are all English Canadian, and therefore "interchangeable, like postage stamps of the Queen's profile."

> At night, when he is trying to get to sleep, he thinks of his sons-in-law. He remembers their names without trouble: the two Bobs, the Don, the Ian, and the last one—Keith, or Ken? Ken. Monique married Ken. Alone, in the dark, he tries to match names and faces. Are both Bobs thin? Pink in the face? Yes, and around the neck. They lose their hair young—something to do with English hairbrushes, he invents.

The four stories in the section called "Canadians Abroad" concern people so out of place that they seem at times to be dreaming their surroundings. The tone here is often disjointed and abrupt—intentionally, one assumes. A musician edgily perched in a disquieting Swiss household is haunted by his mother's bitter, histrionic voice. A young girl alone in France falls into the clutches of an unpleasant acquaintance from home and cannot seem to free herself but drifts along, in a sleepwalker's daze. Another young girl, traveling on the Riviera, has similar difficulty extricating herself from a souring romance, but here the dislocation is less a matter of geography than of age and character. She is the only young one, the only one capable of surprise or enthusiasm among her companions, each of whom is presented here with an anthropologist's detached accuracy.

The final section, "Linnet Muir," contains six stories about a young Canadian woman living in Montreal during the Second World War. Because she is New York-educated—and a bit left-wing to boot—Linnet is something of an outsider in her own country, and as pieces of her past emerge it becomes plain that she's been an outsider of one sort or another all her life. This is easily the strongest section in the book—a moving, oddly sweet group of stories given sparkle by their thorny heroine. In "Between Zero and One," Linnet takes a job in an all-male office and reflects upon the lives of men who have settled for too little forever. In "Voices Lost in Snow," she revives a childhood memory whose significance only now comes clear to her. And "The Doctor" is an absolutely perfect story about a French-Canadian pediatrician functioning in an English-Canadian social circle.

As befits a writer with a strong sense of place, Mavis Gallant can color in an atmosphere for us with just a few well-chosen words. The doctor's old-fashioned office with its sentimental pictures; the musician's dank lodgings in Switzerland; the desolate landscape of northern Canada as seen through the eyes of an English war bride—they are more than visible to us. They convey a feeling: they draw us in, or weigh down our spirits, or comfort us, or chill us, as the case may be.

Place is not all, of course: she has a keen grasp of character, too, and will often pause in the midst of a story to sum a person up in one succinct paragraph—his life as seen from outside, with a dispassionate, telescopic remoteness. Or she will muse on people at leisure, rightfully trusting her readers to

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be as fascinated as she, for example by this description of the men in Linnet's office:

> Each of them seemed to inhabit an invisible square; the square was shared with *my* desk, *my* graph paper, *my* elastic bands. The contents of the square were tested each morning: The drawers of my own desk—do they still open and shut? My desk lamp—does it still turn on and off? Have my special coat hanger, my favorite nibs, my drinking glass, my calendar, my children's pictures, my ash-tray, the one I brought from home, been tampered with during the night? Sometimes one glimpsed another world, like an extra room ("It was my young daughter made my lunch today"—said with a dismissive shrug, lest it be taken for boasting) or a wish outdistanced, reduced, shrunken, trailing somewhere in the mind: "I often thought I wanted . . ." "Something I wouldn't have minded having . . ."

Or a single remark may demonstrate the whole man, as when a father—divorced and many times remarried—apologizes to his small daughter for falling asleep during a performance of *Peter Pan*. "I'm sorry, I should not have slept in your company," he says. "It was impolite." The apology is unnecessary (as it turns out, his daughter was sulking only because the actors had English accents instead of Canadian), but it is splendidly revealing in its courtliness, its solemnity and easy charm. All at once, we know exactly how this man must have dealt with his wives.

The paradox in these stories is that while they give a satisfying sense of fullness, they imply too a great wealth of other material left unsaid. Like the most interesting of real people, they seem to keep holding just a little something back for the next visit. Let us all hope for many more visits from Mavis Gallant.

ANNE TYLER

TRB, *from page 4*

and an equally adorable puppy dog.

Corporate PR departments have eagerly joined in. Southland, parent company of 7-11, used to concentrate on muscular dystrophy, but recently launched an ad campaign on the theme "Child Abuse: it's a crying shame." I called the social agency listed in the ad to ask where they had gotten the figure that one in 12 children is "in danger of" abuse. (An eager-beaver government study couldn't come up with more than one in 100 actually suffering from "abuse or neglect.") A woman said blithely, "Oh, somebody must have gotten it from somewhere. Ask Hill and Knowlton," the PR firm that prepared the ad.

The most shameless exploiters of children, though, have been our nation's politicians. There is now a "Children's Caucus" in the Senate, established on the ludicrous premise that children's interests previously had been ignored "because," says Senator Paula Hawkins, "they have no vote and no lobby." Child abuse is one of those issues politicians love because it's so utterly uncontroversial. No one's for it. So Congress and the president have been having a high old time the past couple of years passing laws against it.

Conservative Republicans who spend most of their political energies denouncing the idea that government can solve any problems at all—including problems it has been solving rather successfully for half a century—forget all that when an issue comes along that the television networks have gotten their constituents all het up about. Suddenly government action is urgent. And none of this state and local near-beer, either. We're talking 200-proof Big Central Government. The Missing Children's Act of 1982 authorized the FBI to search for missing children without any evidence they'd crossed state lines (a requirement that still holds for murderers). Republicans Hawkins and Alfonse D'Amato are the chief backers of a bill called the National Child Protection Act that would apply all sorts of meddlesome national regulations to day-care centers. There's talk of extending federal regulation to baby-sitters. President Reagan himself proposes a substantial budget *increase* for the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, a division of the otherwise-battered Department of Health and Human Services.

For politicians, for the media, for the citizenry, issues like child abuse serve as a substitute for serious politics. It's a problem, sure, and government should do what it can to help. But it's not a systemic problem like unemployment or public education or national defense. Carrying on about child abuse allows everyone to engage in a mock exercise of civic virtue, without engaging the really great questions of government. Unlike child abuse, these are matters on which competing values must be weighed and about which people will tend to disagree.

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

Money: A Suicide Note by Martin Amis (Viking). The manic monologue of a man who has everything but is nothing. (Reviewed 5/6/85)

Harry Emerson Fosdick: Preacher, Pastor, Prophet by Robert Moats Miller (Oxford University Press). The life, times, and crusades of the liberal, ever active minister. (5/6/85)

Small World by David Lodge (Macmillan). Good times with globe-trotting literary professors. (4/15/85)

The War Diaries of Jean-Paul Sartre: November 1939-March 1940 translated by Quintin Hoare (Pantheon). Portrait of the intellectual as a young man. (4/15/85)

Pierre Mendès France by Jean Lacouture, translated by George Holoch (Holmes & Meier). Portrait of a paradoxical political career. (4/8/85)

Henry Purcell in Japan: Poems by Mary Jo Salter (Knopf). An impressive first collection reveals a wise voice and a widely traveling eye. (4/8/85)

Shah of Shahs by Ryszard Kapuściński, translated by William R. Brand and Katarzyna Mroczkowska-Brand (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich). A tale of tyranny, set in Iran. (4/8/85)

Benjamin Constant and the Making of Modern Liberalism by Stephen Holmes (Yale University Press). A valuable study of a complex liberal thinker. (3/25/85)

Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement by James Farmer (Arbor House). Recollections of a turbulent time. (4/1/85)

Continental Drift by Russell Banks (Harper & Row). Characters and their crimes and dreams unfold on a large canvas. (4/1/85)

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Vital Statistics

STANLEY KAUFFMANN recently observed that Hollywood has been infiltrated by its own CIA—Covert Investigation of Adolescents. Another, less steamy operation has been under way for some time, examining teenage sex lives in all 50 states, the OAS—Overt Adolescent Studies. Statistical reports, not titillating flicks, are its product. Now the Alan Guttmacher Institute, always hard at work, has gone international. It recently published a 37-country survey of the least tantalizing aspect of adolescent sexuality: teenage pregnancy. The figures convincingly show that countries with better clinics and sex education tend to have lower teenage birthrates. The U.S. does comparatively badly at both, and it is the only country where the teenage fertility rate has been rising. But the report also leaps from its figures to an argument that what we really need are more liberal, open attitudes about sex—like the Guttmacher Institute's own. Statistics, however, won't ever clinch the case for strictness or looseness. Sexual morality, after all, is based on more than percentages of pregnancies. The birth controllers' permissive pitch, more than their practical suggestions, only helps to polarize policy debate. It's too bad, then, that the report confuses its firmer findings with measurements allegedly showing that America's problem is uniquely repressive sexual attitudes. The only two statistics the Guttmacher people offer aren't exactly scientific. In 1981, 76 percent of Dutch adults agreed that "sex is natural—even outside of marriage." What were they supposed to say, that sex is artificial? And in 1978, only 39 percent of Americans thought premarital sex was "not wrong at all." What does it signify that 61 percent weren't willing to be so categorical—that Americans aren't sexually liberal or just that they aren't simple-minded? Moreover, nobody asked the two groups how they thought naturalness might be related to rightness. Hormones are racing in most 13-year-olds, thanks to Mother Nature, but that doesn't tell us whether kids should be discouraged from rushing into sex by their real mothers—and fathers. Unfortunately, the moral issues aren't as straightforward as the mechanical ones.

TWO OAS emissaries of the empathetic rather than scientific school, Robert (*Children of Crisis*) Coles and Geoffrey Stokes (of *The Village Voice*), have tried their hand at assessing the sexual zeitgeist, too. Their *Sex and the American Teenager* (Harper & Row) has some R-rated scenes, but overall it aims to be G+—positively good for general audiences. "This survey," Dr. Coles writes, "requires respectful attention, and works best, perhaps, when the reader is moved to ask of himself or herself what is right—what ought to be urged as desirable ethically upon oneself and upon others." Not surprisingly, their statistics and anecdotes add up to the conclusion that teenagers are confused—and so are adults—about what's cool, and right, and what isn't. But some of the stories don't quite match the Guttmacher Institute's portrait of prim parents and precocious kids, and seem to take these open-minded authors a little by surprise. The grown-ups who stand out in the anecdotes aren't the fuddy-duddies that lots of liberals like to scorn. Sure, there are the ogres who send their daughter packing when they find her pill dispenser. But more prominent is the mother who eagerly asks her daughter, "Oh, was it good?" The star is the Californian who calmly listens to her daughter confess that she's sleeping with a 37-year-old cocaine dealer, and then responds, "Oh, yeah?" (Stokes gasps, "at the risk of sacrificing [his] liberal credentials.") By contrast, the teenagers sound (although they don't always act) unexpectedly square—reassuringly so, as even Stokes and Coles agree. It turns out that adolescents who are virgins don't feel out of it. On the contrary, when asked "if a kid their age who had *not* had sexual intercourse was socially backward," a huge majority said no. What's more, just about all teenagers think "love" is an all-important prerequisite to sex. The tactics for showing that emotion are as unsophisticated and old-fashioned as ever. "You know, just smile a lot," explained one girl, and elaborated: "And I would say one of my ways is I stick my finger in a person's ribs from behind them." A 14-year-old California Hispanic said wistfully, "I don't think there's much to do. I can't win her heart by slaying a dragon."

SEX SURVEYS all have their flaws, but leave it to the French to figure out how best to probe gastronomic appetites. A recent article in *Paris Match* tells how a team of intrepid reporters deep in Afghanistan toured an abandoned Soviet campground to collect data about the troops' diet. (Look for a military edition of the Michelin guide in your bookstore soon.) The soldiers seem to like the chocolate, canned fish, and condensed milk rations they're issued, for the French reporters found only empty wrappers. The Soviets also apparently eagerly gulp down their grapefruit and orange juice (from Israel!). But the rest of the canned goods—mostly cereal or beans swimming in grease—lay in huge piles unopened on the field. The *mujahadeen*, who won't touch the leftover stuff even when they're hungry, were rapt as the French conducted their taste test. The reporters nibbled the beans and grains and sipped the pork fat. They didn't double over, but it seems doubtful they'll be nominating the Red Army for even one star. Their verdict: *qualité gastronomique lamentable*.

WHAT WILL JAPANESE citizens buy with the $100 their prime minister has urged them to spend on foreign goods? Recent consumer surveys reveal how tricky it is to find suitable items. The Japanese government's list of recommendations isn't very helpful, according to *The Wall Street Journal*: a fondue set (few Japanese are familiar with the dish), a lawn sprinkler (most Japanese don't have lawns), and other curious conveniences. Mr. Nakasone himself may have hit on the answer: foreign sporting goods. He has lots of foreign golf clubs and plans to buy a new Wilson tennis racket. My own favorite low-tech Japanese possession—an imported sweatshirt—suggests that his countrymen ought to be ready to catch the American fitness mania. (It also speaks volumes about barriers to communication.) Emblazoned on the shirtfront is this inspiring slogan, in hybrid Japanese-English: "The minds have been new when we began to notice the sports."

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